

DRAGON

THE

EMBERS



Prologue: Ominous Drums

She could hear it beating. Sitting there in his hands, well... if you could call them hands. It shouldn't have worked. *How* could it be beating? It wasn't attached to anything!

Thump.

The sound maddened her every thought. Even if she could rationalize his story, his claims, there was no reasoning with this. The nine-chambered heart, alive in the hands of the monster before her. He wanted her to have it. And she *burned* to have it. In all her life she'd never wanted anything more.

Thump

When had it started? It was definitely some time last week, though the particular day had escaped her. Before that she had lived a perfectly normal monotonous existence... at least by her standards. A usual day involved inviting people to open up and expose their most deep-seated vulnerabilities, which she would then quickly chew and regurgitate to earn a day's pay. She was more of a pharmacist than a therapist, but her clients seemed to enjoy her company. Work was easy, pay was easy, and that was pretty much all to be had.

Thump

It was Tuesday. Yes, Tuesday, that's when it happened. Cameron received an unmarked envelope in her mailbox, no postage. The letter was written in script, but it looked old. The paper had been artificially aged. It must have been; no one would write something so silly on something so valuable. It was addressed "*To resident,*" and its contents...

" 'After a long and prosperous existence I have come to the end of my life, and I have realized that despite my wealth and power there is one thing I do not possess: an heir to take the reins when death's grim hand finally chokes the life from my old, broken body. Morbid, I know, but it is always good to plan for these contingencies. I have decided to bequeath my fortune to you, the residing party of this address. I will arrive tomorrow at precisely ten. Serendipity has dictated you will carry on my legacy. I look forward to our immanent meeting. Ivan McGregor.' "

The letter was barely legible—in green ink. Yes, green ink, and the pen had torn the paper in several places. Cameron was intrigued by the prospect, so she decided to cancel her ten o'clock to meet with him. This Ivan. The next day she sent her assistant home early and settled into her office, a hot cup of coffee in hand and a spare waiting for her guest.

Thump

Cameron waited eagerly at ten. She waited frustrated at eleven. At noon, she was ready to leave. But just as she reached for the door a knock shook it at its hinges.

"*C... come in,*" she managed to squeak, for the force of it had terrified her. The door was swiftly pulled open, a tall and stocky man filling its frame. In one hand was a suitcase sealed with a padlock.

"I hope you don't mind that I kept you waiting," he said with a sheepish grin. "*Patience is one of the most important traits an individual can possess.*"

"I disagree, Mister McGregor. Punctuality is by far more important. You're two hours late." Cameron was confused; the man looked to be no older than thirty but he had gone on in his letter about his age and the clawing hand of the reaper. Still, she realized that she might have been insensitive to his medical condition, so she chose the words to follow carefully: *"I apologize, you must have been busy with the treatment of your illness. I only wish you had called in advance and informed me--"*

"I'm not sick, I'm dying. And so are you, young lady. It is a biological imperative for life to end. It is the inescapable truth of existence." He was almost furious in his declaration. It was then that Cameron noticed the sound.

Thump

"Do you hear that? It's some kind of thumping sound, like a drum or something."

"Yeah, it's the clock ticking on my offer. Let's get to business, shall we?"

"Wait a minute. ...I know you! You're that guy that's always in the lobby handing out pamphlets. What is this, some sort of 'Kingdom of Heaven' scam? Listen, if you're trying to save souls to win a higher cloud, try somewhere else. You've already wasted over a hundred dollars of my time"

He laughed. *"Ha, and here I thought you were such a bore! Looks like you've got some fire in you after all"*

"What's that supposed to mean?" She was surprised. Certainly she should have hit a nerve with the cloud comment. Then again, missionaries tend to have tough skins.

"It means I know who you are, too. You're that timid woman who always agrees to take my pamphlet and then throws it away as soon as I stop looking. If you focused one tenth of the energy you waste being polite you might actually accomplish something."

"I am a beloved psychotherapist with dozens of dedicated patients--"

"You're a walking prescription pad!" he interrupted. *"When was the last time you didn't sleepwalk through a session? Better yet, when was the last time you stood your ground? You even retracted your objections about my tardiness, because you were afraid you had offended me."*

Cameron was flustered. *"G... get out of my office!"*

"And here you thought that YOU had hit a nerve."

"OUT!"

She pushed him out the door, slammed it, and locked it. *"...Wait, did I say that I hit a nerve, or just think it?"* Shaking her head she shrugged it off, but as she reached her desk another inconsistency tugged at her mind. *"Sleepwalking through my sessions?"*

Cameron noticed that the man had forgotten his briefcase. Picking it up, she could hear what sounded like fiddling small change jingling inside. *"Oh well, I'll stick it in the lost and found!"*

The next day she found a message on the machine in her office. Her assistant had been hospitalized for severe burns, and was in critical condition. Cameron sat down, stunned, and stared at the phone.

"It was supposed to be you" said Ivan McGregor, who had let himself into the office. **"By which I mean you were the target"**. He had his briefcase again, jangling as it swung back and forth.

"You tried to burn me?!" Cameron reached frantically for the phone. She dialed emergency services, but in her panic she forgot to key in the code for an outside line, so all the receiver returned was dial tone. Ivan took the phone from her and hung it back in its rest.

"If I had tried to burn you, you'd be ashes in a can". As he said the words a blast of flame erupted from his fingertip, which he used to light a cigar. Taking a puff, he let loose a gout of black smoke from his nostrils.

"So you're a religious fanatic AND a magician? Where are you hiding the lighter, up your sleeve? Also, you can't smoke in here." She waved her hand to knock the fumes out of her face, coughing several times in the process, though it was more of a non-verbal protest than actual respiratory distress.

"You've got bigger problems than cigar smoke in your carpet. Weren't you listening? Somebody is trying to kill you." As he grimaced, his hands broke out in hard red scabs. Cameron wrote it off as part of his terminal condition.

"Sure, sure, and the only way I'll be safe is if I make the spirit of life a regular part of my life, complete with weekly donations. Get out of here, you dope." She pushed him out the door and locked it. *"Geez, the crazies are getting more voracious by the minute. ...I should get a restraining order"*

Turning around, she saw his briefcase had been abandoned again, this time on her desk. And once more she heard the beating of the drum. This time she grabbed a screwdriver from the tool drawer and forced the lock open. *"Bottle caps? And that thumping... it's coming from inside the package!"*

"Oh god, it's a shrapnel bomb!" She threw the suitcase across the room, scattering its contents across the floor. Resting perfectly amidst the resulting pile was a throbbing pearl of light, roughly the size of a fist. It sent waves of heat pulsing across the room, and despite the danger she knew lurked within she could not help but approach. But Ivan returned, opening the door she had locked, and claimed this pearl.

"Not yet. You're not ready. Yet." With that he departed again, but not before gathering a handful of the caps and stuffing them in his pocket. **"Sorry, I can't help myself. I'm sure you're the same with your collection."**

That night Cameron threw away all the food in her pantry. She went to the supermarket and bought fresh mouthwash and toiletries. She sprayed disinfectant over every inch of her apartment. Surly there was some sort of fungal infection in her brain, or perhaps a narcotic intoxication that was making her have delusions about the man with the pamphlets.

The next day—Friday—finally regained a semblance of normality. Cameron was relieved that she had resolved the problem. But as she cleared her list of appointments she felt a sadness grow in her heart. What if she had been sleepwalking through her life? What if the delusions were a wake-up call? She went home with a feeling of complete dissatisfaction. But waiting at her door was Ivan's briefcase.

She did not dally this time. Throwing the case open, she ripped through the bottle caps in search of the glowing pearl. Instead, she found a copy of one of Ivan's pamphlets. *"Figures, that's what he wanted all along"*

She crumpled up the paper and was about to enter her apartment when she decided that maybe the paper was worth reading. Opening it up, she found the mass-produced 'free love' garbage was obscured by a hand-written message penned with green ink, which she proceeded to read aloud.

" 'Would you look at that, you overwhelmed your ingrained instinct to ignore these things. Sorry about the green ink, it's a sentimental favorite of mine. Anyway, I can see by you reading this that your curiosity is roused, so now it is your turn to make a gesture. Meet me at blah blah address on whatever street.' God, this guy is full of himself" She opened the door to her apartment and was greeted by a tripwire-triggered explosion. Collapsing to the floor she took hold of the now burning note and read the last message.

" 'FYI, my old enemy Frank Gringham is convinced you're my maiden, and now he's trying to kill you. Sorry about that. By the way, he's booby-trapped your apartment so whatever you do make sure not to open the door.' "

Cameron awoke Saturday evening in a hospital bed with a ringing headache and stitched wounds scattered across her body. Tearing out her IV and the various other leads and mechanisms, she gathered her singed clothes and dressed. An intern entered the room. **"Miss, please return to your bed"**

"I'm leaving"

"We cannot allow that until your physician gives you the go-ahead"

Cameron knew she couldn't linger. Someone was trying to kill her. So she used a clever lie that would guarantee that the hospital staff wouldn't stop her. *"I don't have insurance"*

"Oh. Have a nice life"

Cameron caught a cab to the address Ivan the Pamphlet Psycho had mentioned. He seemed to know what this bomber was up to, and she might be able to pry that knowledge from him with violence. She was not prepared for what she found. *"Oh dear god"*

Piles of bottle caps formed mountains and pathways in the dark hole that might have once served as a basement. Every step caused these heaps to quiver.

"Do you like my collection? Pretty impressive, right?" His voice seemed to bounce around the room.

"If this was the inheritance you were offering me, you can keep it."

"Oh, what I'm going to give you is much more memorable than a bunch of rare pop-tops."

"Do you mind explaining why somebody rigged my apartment to explode?"

"It's very simple. He saw I was taking an interest in you, so he assumed I was using you as a refueling pump. But my interest in the apathetic psychotherapist goes much deeper than that."

"Where are you hiding? I don't like talking to people I can't see." Turning a bend, she saw him reclining against one of the heaps of caps. But it wasn't him anymore. It was some sort of giant bipedal reptile. Cameron screamed.

"And this is better?" he jabbed playfully.

"M... Monster!" She retreated backward in a blind panic until the beast revealed the pearlescent shape from before, pulsing with light.

"This is why you're here, right? This is what you're hoping to get from me."

"What is that thing?"

"It's my Heart." He rose from the shifting pile of caps.

"That's not a heart." She hesitantly approached, staring at the little orb in his hands. Suddenly the light dissipated and she could see what it concealed: a disembodied beating heart.

"I wasn't kidding when I said I wanted an heir. I'm tired. I need someone to replace me. I need somebody to help me die."

"So you're handing me the kingdom of the bottle caps? You want me to be the lizard queen?"

"No, I'm handing you the power of the Oroboroi. What you do with it is entirely up to you."

"O... you mean Ouroboros, the self-consuming serpent? Isn't that just supposed to be a metaphor for the universe?" She shook her head. *"This is ridiculous; I'm having a conversation with a concussive hallucination. I'm going back to the hospital."*

Ivan the lizard belched forth a geyser of white-hot flames, melting one of the heaps of caps into bubbling plastics and metals. **"Do you want it or not? Because I've wasted a lot of time on this and we've already gone through the reveal, so if you don't want it I'm going to have to eat you."**

"Okay, okay, don't do anything rash. I'll take it." Thump. She could feel it calling to her. Drawing it close, though, she hesitated. *"Just what am I getting myself into?"*

"It's not so bad. You get to breathe fire and fly without an airplane."

"I'm afraid of heights."

"Ah, that won't last. You'll get used to it in no time. And anything else will just be little surprises along the way"

Thump

She lowered her mouth to the soft flesh.

THUMP

The sound rang in her head as the heart crawled down her throat.

THUMP

And for a moment, silence. She felt a terrible burning sensation in her chest. Time stopped, and she could feel her entire body ignite with agony. She screamed and thrashed around the floor as her insides caught fire. *“Whoops, forgot about that part. To be fair, it did happen more than a few decades ago.”*

Cameron’s flesh tore open, bones snapping and forcing their way through the skin. Her entire body burned as it reformatted itself to its new function. It was the worst experience of her life. But when it was over she felt... different. She felt empowered. She felt GOOD.

THUMP

In her chest now. Where the sound belonged. Where it had always intended to go. *“So then, what now?”*

Ivan sat back down on his pile of caps. *“Now young lady, is where we part ways. Best of luck to you.”* From the pile he drew a ceremonial stone sword, creamy white in color and roughly two feet in length. This he drove into his chest.

“Wait, what are you doing?!” she shouted, but the deed was done. Ivan McGregor, the pamphlet man and bottle cap monster, turned to rock, a statue in his likeness propped up against his precious collection. *“That’s not fair you psychopath! What am I supposed to do?!”*

She raked his corpse with her new claws and it crumbled into a pile of dust. Staring at the power in her hands, she smiled. *“I’ll figure it out.”*

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Introduction

Come on Cameron, you can do this.

Pick up the knife. Okay. Now, take it and make a vertical incision down your chest.

God, where do they get the courage to do this stuff?

It's not going to hurt, it's not going to hurt, it's not going to HURK!

NNNGHGHAH!

Ha, hah ha! Oh what a mess.

Okay... okay, I've got to get past the ribcage now.

It would be so much easier to take out in pieces... but that wouldn't be very healthy now would it?

Come on... break. HAAGH! Deep breath now.

Wrap your fingers around the Heart.

Give it a yank.

HAH! There. Job well done.

Now I just need a mop.

“...In case of fire you have to line up quietly in a single file from smallest to tallest. What is the logic in that? What, do tall people burn slower?”

–Warren Hutcherson

When the word “dragon” is uttered the first thought depends on the person. There are those that simply like dragons for their morphology and implied power. Some are intrigued because they idolize the symbolism that the beast carries. Others recognize them as important components of mythology, be it as an explanation for natural events or simply a depiction of the raw power of change. Still others roll their eyes and write them off as fantasy nonsense; creatures hidden in mountainsides greedily hoarding gold and fair maidens. **Dragon the Embers** seeks to collect these varied images and consolidate them into something greater and more horrific.

Many political factions, including some quite despicable ones, use the dragon as an emblem and a sign of power. Monarchs and tyrants may falsely claim heritage to a draconic bloodline. The idea of genetic right to rule is an old one indeed, and though evidence points to the contrary it is a tightly held belief in all forms of society. *My son will take over the business when I'm gone. He's my son, he'd be the best man for the job.* Obviously that is a light example of what could easily be a very controversial topic, but for the scope of this game simply consider that certain people are ‘born’ for the job, and certain people are born to lead.

If you gathered up all the world leaders and gave them an exam, what would they all have in common? Perhaps the myth of dragon blood isn't as far-fetched as it would seem. Could the act of rising to power *change* a person? Is the secretive life a leader lives for their own protection, or to hide something dark? What is it that makes a leader a Leader? And what are they up to when the eyes of their followers are averted?

A Game of Divine Right

Dragon: the Embers is the story of secret monsters, of the people who became more than human when they seize control of the world around them. It's a story of dehumanization: of vomiting up your soul to gain immortality, of struggling to contain incalculable power, of rising above the stock of humanity and becoming something *more*. It's also a story of genetic attrition; Hearts are a non-renewable resource. Dragons are on their way out, the smoldering ashes of a once brilliant flame. And someday the heat of those ashes will be gone. The last flicker of light is the dragons that remain; they are the embers of the past.

Dragons have one crucial weakness that drives them mad; their heart. Or Heart, rather. Capital H. By removing the Heart a dragon gives herself a chance to dodge death, for even if she is burned to cinders her body may form again from the Heart. However... the Heart is also a great weakness, to be stolen and destroyed or consumed means the dragon dies instantly—and likely is replaced by someone else. This fact makes most of the Oroboroi incredibly paranoid, so much in fact that much of their long lives is spent trying to develop the perfect protection for this precious cargo. Needless to say there is no such perfection.

Dragons disguise themselves as the humans they used to be, but that is not their true shape. One may

take on any number of their *real* traits with little effort, but while the truth may be more comfortable and more powerful, it is not discrete. Since dragons are usually in positions of authority—be it actual authority or authority puppeteered—it is useful not to reveal these differences, firstly because it would be a publicity nightmare and secondly because it would no doubt lead to torches and pitchforks. Part of being a modern dragon is about finding ways to subtly take advantage of the powerful truth without revealing it. While being exposed as an Oroboroi isn't the end of the world, it does have potentially fatal consequences.



Finding oneself raised so far above humanity can be dizzying, but members of the Oroboroi have to temper themselves with the fact that they *chose* this fate. The only way to become a member is to eat the heart of an old member, and with the first bite that fate is sealed. No matter how much a dragon wants to pretend she's human, the power that sets her apart will exist as long as she lives and will tug at her from afar should she shun it. Embracing the new life completely isn't an option either; the dragon risks losing her perspective. It takes respect for the power and the knowledge it isn't self-affirming to live a dragon's life properly.

This is **Dragon: the Embers**—the Storytelling game of Divine Right.

A Societal Metaphor

Most dragons from western myth are simply monsters, ravaging the countryside in search of meal and plunder. A monstrous beast of six limbs, two being wings. Something to be killed. Virtually opposite are the eastern myths, in which dragons are seen as righteous beings in command of the waters of the world, akin to gods. They are a symbol of purity and power, though sometimes those features can cause destruction. It was the modern reinvention of the dragon that created the fire-breathing madly-intelligent hoarders. For this book, we will be combining these three concepts to create a new type of dragon.

Embers dragons are no more intelligent than people, seeing as they used to *be* people. They are also neither benevolent nor malevolent, they are both. A necessary part of the world proper. Embers dragons gather swag not particularly out of greed, but to feed on the metaphoric value said swag possesses. They have a heat-source burning in their gut—the Furnace—and it takes quite a bit to keep it hot. Finally, Embers dragons have a psychic bond with their Heart, and can survive so long as it is intact (even if it is not in the body).

So where does the metaphor for society start? Replace 'Dragon' with 'Leader' and it becomes very clear. In times of old leaders were born into their position, a genetic predisposition to lord over others. But eventually the plebs beneath figured out leadership was not exclusive to royalty, and some rose up to claim the position. Ironically they became just as the ones they'd replaced, initiating the cycle anew.

It took a while, but eventually dragons figured out how to protect themselves from usurpation. Cutting out the Heart, *that* was the secret. A dragon could die time and again, but so long as the Heart is whole she can come back to reclaim her position. This too is part of the metaphor. Though a position can be lost time and again, the only way to eliminate a leader permanently is to destroy the system that rebuilds her.

Genetic Attrition

If Dragon is a metaphor about leaders, why are their numbers dwindling? Though leaders can be replaced, they are also destroyed by competitors. As eliminations stack up the numbers dwindle, eventually 'endangered' becomes 'final specimen', and from there it isn't even a baby step to extinction.

So why not breed for more numbers? History has shown that such a method does not work well. Heirs to power are spoiled by their entitlement, and usually eradicated in a coup. Dragons have also given up their right to genetic heirs by removing their Hearts, so such a notion is no longer even possible. An inability to produce draconic children means negative population growth and thus negative population; the point being no new dragons are born and so no new hearts bolster the population.

This is not to say that dragons are incapable of creating children. The children are simply born 100% human, 100% of the time.

But a coup results in a new leader, yes? Yes, and the game models this with the consumption of the Heart. However, the draconian model of undisputed general is becoming less and less practical in a modern world; these new leaders are an entity of an entirely different form. Whether or not such is a good thing remains to be seen.

A Voluntary Madness of Heart

A new dragon is born when she consumes the heart of an old dragon, in its entirety. This is a life-affirming experience, and the means through which the heart was acquired forever marks the type of beast she'll be (It provided her with her Method). Most know at least a little about what will happen when they take this step... after all, there's rarely incentive to just eat a mysterious muscle for the fun of it. Part of the personal horror stems from this foreshadowing; when actions lead to regret the dragon can only blame herself. After all, she took that first bite.

The following metamorphosis, known to the Oroboroi as the Coronation, is exhilarating if not just a little frightening. The entire body burns (particularly in the region of the heart and throat) as the Furnace ignites. Many parts become unfamiliar and foreign. It takes time to adjust. Of anything it is an unforgettable, if not solitary, experience.

Philosophies

After the Coronation a dragon has to make a decision: whether or not to remove her Heart. The prospect of immortality wins most over. Regardless of whether she pursues this removal (or have someone else assist in the matter, if courage is insufficient) or not, a new Oroboros is faced with a grim consideration. She has just ended the life of another to become something... unnatural. Will she accept this burden and try to live up to the responsibility? Or will she shut her eyes and close her ears and run until her feet bleed? This decision will dictate which philosophy she pursues, or if she will become a Caitiff.

Choosing how she will handle her new condition involves defining the lens through which she examines all things. A Philosophy dictates how an Oroboros will handle her kingdom and the world around her. It is her world outlook and her primary motivation.

Theme and Mood

Though every story told with the Storyteller System is unique, stories that involve dragons have some common ground regardless of setting or plot. These anchors are the mood and theme, which are inescapably sewn into the state of Oroboroi membership.

Theme

The prevalent theme in any **Dragon** game is divine right facing faded glory. This often takes the form of relevance. In a world that is evolving beyond a need for them, dragons as a group have to take a stab at importance or be trampled in the march of time. Being natural leaders, this attempt usually takes the form of climbing social ladders.

Dashing to the top is dangerous business. There's nothing left to grab onto, with a great plummet waiting at just a single push. Mortals are vicious competitors in this pursuit, but they are not the only threats. *Other* things also vie for the reins.

Unlike the ones they dethroned, the Oroboroi are NOT indisputable gods, and their authority can be challenged. Because of their nature as usurpers, their status as kings is not secure. Their well-being is directly related to the respect they receive in their positions, and to be starved of that authority literally turns their flesh to stone. Fossilization is a serious threat for any Oroboros, which is why they must fight for authority in every avenue they can find.

Mood

The mood of any **Dragon** game is simple: paranoia for the sake of self-preservation. Despite the fact that they are practically indestructible, the critical weakness attached to this revival cycle is a matter of constant concern for dragons of any age.

With the information revolution it has never been more dangerous to hold membership with the Oroboroi. Whispers become screams as little fragments of truth slip free into the ether and more secrets become fact. Though many are hesitant to believe, there is always someone willing to research further. And that research is becoming easier and easier. There's a reason exposure and extinction start the same way.

How to Use This Book

A sampling of the Oroboroi in whole can be found in the **Introduction**; it's a good section to check before planning a **Dragon: The Embers** game.

Chapter One explores what it means to be a dragon, from history to society to threats to provinces.

To make use of the Storyteller system and craft a member of the Oroboroi, go to **Chapter Two**. It covers mechanics exclusive to dragons, such as the functions of the Furnace, fossilization, Mandate, and special combat mechanics new to this template.

If you're looking for some power, turn to **Chapter Three**. It details all the physical traits a dragon can incorporate into her True Form, as well as the mysterious powers Edicts grant her.

Story and setting swatches are the focus of **Chapter Four**, which provides a range of different story seeds for basing a chronicle. This chapter also delves further into the various antagonists a dragon might face, and covers some setting shards that are compatible with a Mirrors game.

In **Appendix One** the Treasury is discussed in detail. From breaching the Miasma to dealing with anima to Nightmares and their Numina, you'll find everything you want to know about soul treading here.

Appendix Two covers the setting of San Francisco, California. Discover the supernatural history behind the City by the Bay, explore the conflict of an Oroboroi-saturated region, and learn to fear the World Serpent.

At the end of paragraphs that have mechanics, you may see one or two highlighted blocks of text. **[Mirrors]** text details how the rules in this book need to be adjusted for a particular Mirrors hack that is incompatible, and **[GMC]** does the same for incompatibilities with the God Machine Chronicle rules update. If you are not using either of those books, consider the highlighted sections optional like any sidebar.

Sources and Inspiration

Dragons have permeated art, literature, and culture, both in a classical sense and in modern depictions. They have representations in some form or another from every culture in the world, and depending on how flexible you are allowing your definition to be they exist in some form or another in EVERY piece of fiction. As such, creating a list of inspirations is somewhat difficult, because the inspirations are everywhere. Still, here are a few works in particular worth examining if you need some ideas.

Video Games

Alundra (PSX): You may have trouble getting a copy of this classic top-view platformer by Matrix Software, but it fits perfectly into the concept of soul treading and Nightmares. In the game you play a teen called Alundra who, shipwrecked in the village of Inoa, must help the superstitious residents survive their fatal dreams. Since REM sleep is the gateway to the soul, the imagery of this game is easily adapted for use within the Treasury.

Breath of Fire Series (Mostly PSX and SNES): Ignoring the religious overtones, the Breath of Fire Series (by Capcom) is a great example of genetic attrition. The third game also involves a riveting gene mechanic which parallels the Ablution system of this game. Breath of Fire provides an excellent idea of what a dragon is like when they take human form... or rather what a human who can turn into a dragon is like. The fifth game in the series (on the PS2) also goes into some really intriguing concepts, as the protagonist becomes a vessel for the spirit of an ancient dragon (and on a particularly bad game-over, the old god erupts from his body).

Skyrim (Xbox 360, PS3, and PC): Yep, you knew it was coming. If you're looking for inspiration when it comes to Edicts, nothing beats the shouts of the dovah of Skyrim province. The game is also a visually stunning source of inspiration for dragon visages.

The Legend of Zelda, A Link to the Past (SNES, GBA, and Virtual Consoles): The Golden Land and Jörmungandr's Treasury are fraternal realities: both represent a human being's internal motivations with external characteristics. While the Golden Land is a separate physical space and the Treasury is a shift in perception, the former can be used as both visual and thematic inspiration for the latter.

Film

DragonHeart: The 1996 film by Universal Pictures about a dragon and a king that share the same heartbeat is a perfect fit for the Bond of Brood Merit in this game, and heart removal in general. The movie explores the shared sensations and moral pangs of two who live with one heart. Plus, it has a dragon in it. Wee!

The Godzilla Series: Kaiju films are about giant monsters destroying cities, or terrifying the populace while fighting each other. The Godzilla series of films, originally created by Tomoyuki Tanaka, is a great example of this. Watch one or two of these films if you really want to understand collateral damage.

How to Train your Dragon: A DreamWorks production from 2010 that reinvented a children's book series from earlier in that decade, this film is useful for visualizing a dragon's physical features and body language. Juvenile, but justifiable as a "scientific study".

The Hobbit: The Peter Jackson retelling of Tolkien's adventure features one key component that is quite useful to someone trying to run a **Dragon** game, that component being the sheer unbelievable size of Smaug's treasury. Use the imagery of an ocean of gold to picture truly tremendous Hoards.

Reign of Fire: This 2002 post-apocalyptic monster film from Touchstone Pictures features dragons as the key antagonists. More importantly, it is a film involving dragons that is set in the present! ...Or rather, the near future. Reign of Fire is a good source if you need help picturing how a modern human would go about hunting a dragon. The grade of destruction is also a somewhat understated example of the havoc that Jörmungandr would raise if awakened: skies filled with monsters and fire, society shattered into tiny havens clinging to survival... real apocalyptic despair.

Literature

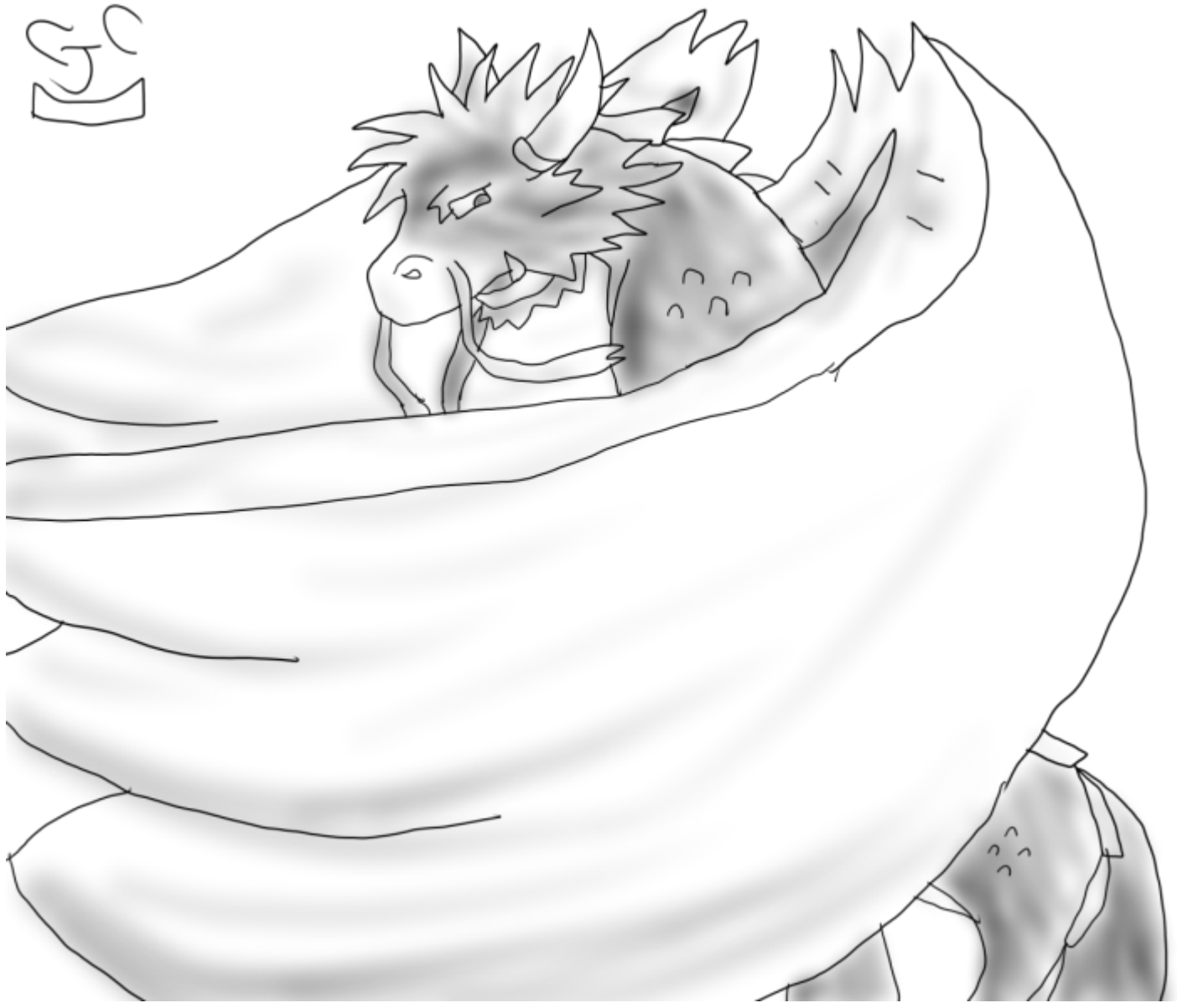
The Works of Edgar Allan Poe: This haunted, nightmare driven poet of the 1800s wrought countless fantastic works of poetry and short fiction, most of which connect with the themes of **Dragon** on at least some levels. Two that fit perfectly are "The Cask of Amontillado" and "The Tell-Tale Heart". The prior covers the horror of revenge in the name of honor, and the latter quite literally explains the paranoia that comes with hiding a dragon's Heart.

The Dragon Delesangre: This novel (by Alan F. Troop) tells the story of a modern dragon seeking a mate. It is of utility primarily because it depicts a monster taking human form and blending with a populace that is primarily antagonistic. Romance gets in the way, but overall it's a passable source of inspiration.

The Tale of Cadmus: In this ancient Greek myth, the hero Cadmus founds the city of Cadmeia (which would someday become Thebes) by following a cow until it lies down to rest. He also slays a dragon, and is told to plant its teeth as seeds. When he waters them, full-grown soldiers sprout (some say they were clones of Cadmus). These sown men, or Sparti in Greek, were the inspiration for the Sparti merit in this template.

Jason and the Argonauts and the quest for the Golden Fleece: The Golden Fleece came from the magical ram that carried Phrixus to safety when his stepmother attempted to kill both him and his sister. While Helle fell to her death, Phrixus arrived safely in Colchis. The Fleece was placed in a grove under guard by a fearsome serpent (which was a dragon in some versions of the story). When Jason came to claim the fleece, the dragon actually swallowed him, and only disgorged him when Medea put it to sleep. This story was inspiration for the high divinity Oroboroi swallowing their victims whole, and also serves as a good source of imagery for the gruesome reality of fighting a dragon. The quest also involved sowing the teeth of a dragon to grow soldiers, and so could be interpreted as an additional source for the Sparti merit.

The Twelve Labors of Herakles: Herakles (or Hercules, depending on who you talk to) was tasked with ten labors for his cousin Eurystheus after he killed his wife and children (in some versions due to divine intervention, in others due to post-traumatic stress). He was penalized two additional labors for receiving help with the slaying of the Hydra of Lerna and for requesting payment for his task at the Stables of Augeas. One such penalty labor was to fetch golden fruit from the Garden of the Hesperides. Nymphs and a multi-headed dragon protected this godly produce. Depending on which version of the story you find, Herakles either slays the dragon and fetches the fruit himself or holds up the sky for Atlas while he goes to the garden in Herakles' stead. Both the hydra and the dragon of the garden are sources of inspiration for material in this book, the former serving as a source for the Hydra complex that plagues devourers and the latter serving as a connection between dragons and golden fruit (a relationship that plays out in the Wood Edict). There's a lot of great imagery associated with Herakles' labors, particularly in red figure vase paintings. It's worth researching.



Lexicon

Ablution: A physical trait of dragonhood. To manifest an Ablution is to relinquish human features and be washed over by the heat of the divine. To disband an Ablution is to disguise the true nature and blend in the muck.

Anima: The soul of a mortal as seen within the shallows of Jörmungandr's Treasury.

Antecedent: An Oroboroi Heart's previous owner.

Asset: A source of Breath.

Breath: The heat of a dragon's Furnace, it fuels the Oroboroi and their mysterious powers.

Brood: A dragon's family unit.

Bonded: Mortals that possess a piece of dragon heart in chest, usually as a gift.

Challenger: An Oroboroi who received her Heart as a prize for a test of skill; Challengers shine in matters of honor and hard work.

Collapse, the: The mythical end of Dominion in which mankind rose up to steal the hearts of the Oroboroi. There have been at least two collapses.

Common Ablution: A draconic trait common to Oroboroi of all Methods.

Constituent: A mortal living within the boundaries of an Oroboroi Province.

Coronation, the: The first manifestation of Ablutions, immediately after consuming an Oroboroi Heart.

Daylight: The Material world.

Deep Ones: Otherworldly Faustian bargainers.

Delver: An Oroboroi who received her Heart as a result of research and investigation; Delvers are usually intellectuals and antiquers.

Den: An alliance of Oroboroi.

Devourer: A dragon who stokes her Furnace with the Hearts of others.

Dominion: The mythical time of monarchy by genetic right, ended by the first Collapse.

Dragon-Born: A child born from a dragon and human mating.

Edict: Thought made reality. An enforcement of will upon the material, instigated by a proclamation. Dragon magic.

Einherjar: A body possessed by a powerful departed soul. Highly hostile towards the Oroboroi.

Furnace: The heat of a dragon's Heart, held in chest and reflecting the degree of her leadership potential.

Graft: Boney clasp that supernaturally enhances other objects. Made by erasing a mortal.

Grifter: An Oroboroi who received her Heart through treachery or resources; Grifters are noxious and toxic, and are not to be trusted.

Heart: A blood pumping muscle. A dragon's weak point and most treasured possession, theirs possesses nine-chambers.

Hydra: A multi-headed Oroboroi who's rampant cannibalism is painted all over her body.

Ideology: A closely held belief that serves as a source of Breath.

Inheritor: An Oroboroi who received her Heart as a gift; Inheritors are social titans.

Lair: A dragon or Den's home.

Mandate: The set of rules by which a dragon is judged. To break the mandate is to be an unfit ruler.

Maiden: A mortal subjugated and oppressed by a dragon.

Method: The means by which a dragon came into possession of her Heart.

Method Ablution: Ablutions seen most frequently in dragons of a particular Method.

Miasma, the: An aura of mental static that prevents mortals from sharing their story after witnessing an Oroboroi's power. Does not work on technology.

Non-Method Ablution: Ablutions not usually seen in dragons of a particular Method.

Oroboroi (or-ROB-or-roy): Dragons.

Oroboros (or-ROB-or-ohs): Dragon (singular).

Ouroboros (UR-ooH-BOOR-ohs): The mythical self-consuming serpent.

Philosophy: An Oroboroi outlook and worldview.

Philosophy of the Caitiff: A rejection of leadership and the Oroboroi condition, resulting in a wanderer's life. The philosophy that favors replenishing Breath by consuming livestock and sometimes human beings.

Philosophy of the Imperator: A call to arms and military command. The world is an army, and the dragon its conqueror. The philosophy that favors replenishing Breath by tremendous hoards of wealth.

Philosophy of the Paragon: A thirst for attention. The world is a stage, with the dragon in the spotlight. Lead by example. The philosophy that favors replenishing Breath by careful maintenance of a province.

Philosophy of the Savant: A drive to teach the world to be better. Come disciples, study my teachings beneath the shade of the trees. The philosophy that favors replenishing Breath through inspiring maidens.

Philosophy of the Vizier: A determination to get things done, at any cost. Fame is not the goal. The philosophy that replenishes Breath through a balance of sources.

Province: A dragon's range of property, both territorial and by population.

Red Pearl: Heart.

Reforging: The process of manifesting Ablutions.

Shayatin: Corpse eaters that live in the Treasury. As a rule, they devour suppressed traits and memories.

Slayer: An Oroboroi who received her Heart through murder; Slayers are vicious and powerful.

Spark, the: The Big Bang, fall of Huang Long and birth of the universe.

Treasury, the: Soul of the world. The Treasury is contained within the Heart of every dragon, which is contained within the Daylight world, which is contained within the Treasury. Accessing this place is a matter of altering one's perception.

True Form: The state of having all Ablutions manifest. A complete absence of mortal 'inferiorities'

True Heart: The state of living with Heart in chest; a refusal to remove the Heart for immortality.

Twilight: A state of existence where an object exists in the Material world but is not material.

Slang

Burnouts: Heart Eaters.

Chapmans: Deep Ones.

Coatls: Central/South American Dragons.

Drakes: European Dragons.

Englunds: Nightmares.

Fog/The Fog: The Miasma.

Ghidorahs: Hydras.

Grimms: Changelings.

Karloffs: Prometheans.

Lons: Werereatures.

Lugosi: Vampires.

McKellens: UK Dragons, also Mages and Thaumaturges.

Moores: Sin-Eaters.

Pigs: Shayatin.

Rains: Ghosts.

Romeros: Einherjar.

Snakes: Celtic and Korean Dragons.

Trippers: Lucid Dreamers.

Unmarried: Maidens.

Wights: Old term of the Undead.

Winchesters: Hunters.

Wyrms: Asian main land Dragons; old term for Celtic Dragons.

Zillas: Pacific Rim Asian Dragons.



Chapter One: Fire of the Oroboroi

Cameron sat in the diner slowly stirring the table sugar into her coffee. It was her fourth cup. Normally she'd only have one, and it'd be decaffeinated, but her recent shift in fortune had made her bold. It was odd to be drinking it on such a hot day, but the bean water made the cavity of her chest warm and that felt good.

That guy by the window had been staring at her for twenty minutes. He hadn't even ordered anything; he just sat there pretending to read the paper. Poorly pretending. Cameron wasn't worried, though. She was practically indestructible after all.

The edges of the man's newspaper began to sag with red, and he looked around with greater care. The people around him began to back away and then fled the establishment. There were a few screams as the flesh on his arms began to fester and peel.

The man stood, dropping the bloodied print to the floor. Glaring sternly at Cameron, his lips widened into a smile of brilliant white teeth. When he spoke, he sounded hungry:

"I've found you."

"He who fights too long against dragons becomes a dragon himself; and if you gaze too long into the abyss, the abyss will gaze into you."

—Friedrich Nietzsche

Before the Coronation a dragon is mortal. There's no mystical predetermination that slates a mortal for membership in the Oroboroi, so eating the Heart is their first step into the supernatural. While this brings a refreshing change in perspective, most learn things about the world they were better off not knowing.

The world is less fair than it seems. When it comes down to it, life is nothing but a giant pileup, and the one on top holds the highest chance for survival.

A new kind of Cardio

In the days of old the dragon was feared. Holding the stature of a god, she sat untouchable on the backs of the plebs, who would do everything in their power to please her (so that she wouldn't incinerate them). But as humankind became enlightened new gods took the throne, and banished the monsters from sight.

The Dragon was distraught. Without belief, and without the stature that accompanied it, she would fade into obscurity and ineptitude. An ancient god from the deep—long forgotten but still immensely powerful—came to her in a dream and offered her a choice. "I can make you eternal," he said, "but I do not work for free."

"Your ambition, your foresight, or your joy. This is the price I demand." The deep one reeked of the sea's rot, but his words were sickly sweet.

"I cannot part with my ambition" the Dragon said, "for without it my life would be pointless."

"Then your ambition you shall keep," the deep one said, a silhouette of the Dragon's gut becoming illuminated.

"I cannot part with my foresight," the Dragon said, "for without it I cannot shape the world as I must."

"Then your foresight you shall keep," the deep one said, as the eyes of the Dragon lit up like stars. "So you would part with your joy?" The deep god smiled; a wicked grin of sharp teeth.

"Yes, that is the only acceptable choice."

The forgotten god of the deep reached into the Dragon's chest and removed her Heart. Holding it out in his hand, he offered it freely. "Keep this someplace safe," he said, "You may need it again. But remember, should you welcome it home my gift is forfeit."

With that, the Dragon awakened.

Dominion and the Collapse

The time when dragons were prominent was called *Dominion*. They were regarded as a perfect combination of fear and respect, which let them leech off civilization while throttling its growth. It was the period when dragons were gods.

But as humankind evolves, it invents new deities. Ones less demanding and less likely to retaliate with wrath. Dragons lost their status, and likewise the power they held over the world. In a vain effort to reclaim their usurped thrones, the dragons removed their Hearts. With the loss of their joy came the ability to blend with the sheep, and so dragons vanished into myth and infected the world of man.

But not everyone forgot. While the dragons climbed back into their seats of power, these people watched. And when the guard was dropped, they struck. The dredges killed their masters. The dredges ate their hearts. And the dredges became the new masters. This was *the Collapse*.

By the power of worship, a man became a monster. By the power of worship, a man became a god. But he was not fit for the position like his predecessor; he did not have the stature to extend his rule beyond his life. A charismatic dictator... *that* is what came out of the Collapse. A new ruler could rise only by destroying the old one, and so Oroboroi became the word to describe them. A serpent sustained only by itself but dying a little more with each and every bite.

Personal Matters Draconic

The Oroboroi are as diverse a people as the imaginations that forged them. Still, there are a few areas where they all hold common ground. These include their initial metamorphosis, the Heart removal, the methods through which they acquired

their Hearts and the schools of thought through which they examine the world around them.

The Coronation

When a mortal eats a dragon's Heart, she joins the Oroboroi. But what is that like? First off, it's the worst heartburn she will ever experience. Sharp, insanely hot pain spikes at the center of her chest. Then, both skin and muscle begin to scream as they grow white hot and re-forged. Her body is hammered into her own personal image of what a dragon *should* look like... at least within reason. Finally, the heat dies down and the new Oroboroi is faced with a new sensation, a terrifying rush of cold that sweeps down her body. This is a warning; she must keep the furnace fueled. Coupled with the shiver is a hallucination, wherein she directly experiences the fall of another dragon. She personally witnesses the collapse described in myth.

Some Oroboroi feel that the vision of the collapse is fictional, built into the Coronation as a conduct guide and looming threat rolled into one. Others observe the visions more literally and try to learn from them. Either way, a character's reaction to these two stories will help her choose her philosophy.

Heart Removal

Usually a very personal affair, removing the Heart involves making a vertical incision down the chest, then cracking open or breaking off the ribcage and finally severing the four veins and five arteries that connect the Heart to the bloodstream (this sets them apart from mortals who only have two veins and two arteries forming these connections). As it is detached, the light of the Furnace takes on a firmer form in the chest cavity, acting as a substitute pump in the Heart's absence. For mortals, this is a very fatal process. For the Oroboroi, it is an incredibly painful and likely traumatizing process, but one that will not end in death.

After the Heart has been removed, the sternum can be replaced, healing instantly. When closed, the chest wound cauterizes leaving a hard-to-spot scar.

Methods

Each dragon becomes what she is by acquiring the Heart of another dragon. The means by which this Heart is acquired have a greater influence on the new dragon than they would seem. A dragon's



Method helps to classify which traits she'll likely possess, as well as the way she conducts herself in her new life.

A Method falls into one of five categories (the fit may not always be the best, but a suspension of disbelief and generalized description helps). Those that acquire their Heart by taking a life are called the Slayers. Research and treasure hunting leads to the birth of a Delver. When Hearts are a prize of competition, a Challenger is the result. Conversely, if Hearts are the cornerstone of a heist or the subject of a con, a Grifter is made. And finally, Hearts that are gifted forge Inheritors.

Slayers

Often called "the Rabid Monster", the Slayer is forceful, violent, and impatient. Bloodshed is her first resort, not her last, and she has the muscle to back it up. The Ablutions a Slayer incorporates into

her True Form always have something to do with war.

Delters

“The Inquisitive Monster”, as Delters are sometimes called, is curious, determined, and driven. Delters want to know everything about everything, and they have the time to do it. Delters use Ablutions that enhance their intellectual pursuits.

Challengers

Also known as “the Devoted Monster”, Challengers are skilled, tactful, and arrogant. A Challenger is always looking for the next big game, no doubt because she thinks she’s unbeatable or maybe because she wants someone to finally best her. The True Form of a Challenger is that of some great champion, ready to take on all odds through sheer force of will.

Grifters

Referred to as “the Noxious Monster”, a Grifter is deceitful, cunning, and treacherous. The favored pass-times of a Grifter involve setting traps and pulling the rug out from other people. Grifters are rotten on the inside, and it shows on the outside when they assume Ablutions. They’re toxic.

Inheritors

Synonymous with “the Entitled Monster”, the Inheritor is socially favored, pompous, and ambitious. Ingrained by their initial handout, Inheritors expect respect and are adept at negotiation. Their True Form is a perfect combination of stature and elegance.

Schools of Thought

Less important than the Method and a larger matter of choice, a school of philosophy is the meter upon which an Oroboros measures herself.

A Philosophy dictates how an Oroboros regards her Province, her constituents, her maidens, and her hoard... everything that defines her as a leader. Is she a military champion? A public figure of note? A puppeteer? A coward? A philosophy answers these questions, and more: it provides a framework through which an Oroboros may rationalize her membership in the species, her attitude towards mortals she controls and mortals she does not, and

how she handles exchanges with others of her own kind.

Imperator

An Imperator is a general and everyone she interacts with are soldiers marching to battle. She is stern with her allies, who she commands with unquestionable authority. She is ruthless with her enemies, destroying them utterly body and soul. The whole world is against an Imperator and injustice is its army, but she will not lay down her sword at the opposition. No, she is mobilizing her forces to strike. Failure is not an option.

Paragon

A Paragon needs to be needed. A Paragon seeks to enlighten by example. As such, a Paragon must be a beacon of respect in her community. She controls the world with careful politics and benevolence... serving as a brass ring for which others should strive. To the Paragon all the world is a stage; supporting cast receive her love, but those that upstage her disappear. To be invisible is to be powerless.

Savant

There is no better teacher on Earth than an Oroboroi Savant. A Savant seeks to educate the mortal masses so that they might carry on once the Oroboroi element has departed. Chaos is the catalyst of change and intelligence is its driving force. By contrast ignorance is poison and must be stamped out, by force if necessary.

Vizier

There is power among the masses. There is protection in sitting beside the throne, rather than upon it. The Viziers change the world through the power of the people, motivating protests, strikes, and ground swells to inspire the mortal comrades around them. Principles are more important than power; to corrupt the spirit of the ideal is ground for destruction, in the most horrific way imaginable.

Caitiff

An Oroboros who rejects her membership is a Caitiff, a coward and a criminal who wanders the world without attachment. She sees the apocalypse on the horizon and hears the call to arms, but a Caitiff knows that death accompanies the responsibility that awaits. Is it so wrong to just stop and smell the flowers along the way?

Life of the Flickering Flames

The Oroboroi may live virtually forever, but such a life is not without hardships. Besides the immediately apparent horror of outliving all their loved ones, an Oroboroi must cope with the fact that she has access to stupendous capabilities, but has few appropriate situations in which to expend them. Her membership is her greatest gift and darkest secret, and most of her life is spent trying to take advantage of the gift part without giving away the secret part.

Mortals that peel away the secret face the tragic repercussions of chasing the dragon; forever cursed and driven mad by a story no one will believe. A force called the Miasma prevents them from sharing their experience, usually driving them to hunt down and slay the dragon that traumatized them.

Another thing the Oroboroi must face is the fire burning inside of them. The Furnace is no ordinary flame; it must be fueled with the admiration of mortals. This infernal crucible within drives the Oroboroi to greater things. Those that continue living the life they did before their Coronation find it does not fill them the way they did before. Without the admiration of mortals, an Oroboroi will wither and turn to stone.

The Miasma

Mortals that chase the dragon are subjected to the Miasma, an ancient mysticism that protects the Oroboroi secret. Unlike the lunacy or memory lapse that protects other creatures of the night, the Miasma does not clean the slate of the victimized mortal's mind. They remember their encounter with the supernatural with stunning clarity. The Miasma, rather, prevents mortal witnesses from effectively retelling their story. Like the fisherman's catch, the words get scrambled as they leave the lips and any attempt to make use of visual aids results in a mundane (and sometimes embarrassing) substitute. A witness might attempt to describe the Oroboroi but instead describe an alligator.

This was originally beneficial; the Miasma formed in the first days of the first collapse as a final effort to protect the dragons' true power, regardless of how corrupted it had become. Mortals that witnessed the divinity would be shunned by their peers, leaving no option but to submit to serfdom at the dragon's feet. But the power did not

consider that a cornered animal will attack, not submit.

Mortals subjected to the Miasma might tell themselves that they overreacted to an explainable phenomenon and accept the ridicule that accompanies it... if they're lucky. The unlucky ones go mad from the rejection and mockery that accompanies their wild story. They end their days in an asylum... or they pick up jade arms and go dragon hunting.

The effect of the Miasma are weakening over time, partly because the power is fading as the Oroboroi face extinction and partly because human ingenuity is outpacing the fantastic. Just as fabricated gods replaced the original dragons, technology is surpassing the boundaries of their magic. This includes the Miasma. The blurring of a witness' story does not apply to photographic evidence, and modern forensic techniques can detect peculiarities in residual evidence, such as draconic blood and scales. Eventually, the force of the Miasma will be insufficient to prevent exposure.

Oroboroi Society

A dragon and her province combined are easily compared to an independent nation. Likewise, the relationships between two dragons can be easily analyzed by thinking of them in a world scope, rather than a personal one. Dragons forge trade routes with each other, swap techniques, and make treaties, but they could never really be called friends. So long as a relationship is mutually beneficial or sufficiently forced, the Oroboroi will interact.

It is this 'island' mentality that keeps the Oroboroi in check, as they are too paranoid and greedy to actually collaborate on a regular basis. So in truth, the Oroboroi don't really have a society. It's a maelstrom of control freaks trying desperately to shield themselves from calamity. Despite this, there are a few rules of etiquette that (most) Oroboroi follow.

1: The Subjects must not Know

The presence of the Oroboroi and the details of their physiology are precious secrets that if leaked could endanger every living dragon. This rule is a matter of self-preservation. In the wake of the fading Miasma, to break it is to risk extinction.

2: *The Devourers must not be Harbored*

The Heart is a delicacy a dragon is only allowed to enjoy once. Those that eat Hearts only serve to accelerate the end of days. Members of the Oroboroi are forbidden from interacting with the Hungry both as a message of self-preservation and for the good of their species. If an Oroboroi meets one of the heart-eaters, she should kill him, or find somebody who can.

3: *The Righteous must honor Surrender*

Members of the Oroboroi are free to place pressure on their peers, be it for wish of land or simple rat-bastardy. All such pressure, political or physical, must stop when the dragon surrenders. In essence, every dragon has a right to demand negotiations, and that dragon is guaranteed her safety up and through the execution of that meeting. Her fate afterwards depends on the agreement forged, but will not impart physical violence. Likely, she will be incorporated as a vassal in the winning Den's holdings, or she'll be deported.

It is important to note that this rule of etiquette only applies to members of the Oroboroi. Those that extend these courtesies to mortals or other supernatural beings are exceptional, but rare. The

golden rule of survival enforces this. If an Oroboroi wishes to be treated fairly when she is bested, she'd better do the same for those she conquers.

4: *The Gracious will greet Guests without Malice*

Vagabond Oroboroi and those that decide to vacation may sometimes wander into the province of another dragon (with or without knowledge of this blunder). Provided the intrusive dragon does not stir up trouble, she is allowed to spend three days in the other dragon's province before she'll be disturbed. If at that time she is asked to leave and she refuses, the other dragon is within his rights to attack her by any means.

This rule is enforced by mutual courtesy. If a dragon wishes to be treated well in another's province, she'd best extend the same welcoming atmosphere lest she be rendered a hypocrite.

Dens

The name is a little deceiving, but Den comes from a self-loathing Oroboros who called dragon alliances a 'Den of Evil'. Unfortunately, the name stuck.

The Oroboroi population is so phenomenally low that usually the only other dragon one meets is the Heart's previous owner. Still, paths do cross,



and when dragons meet they need a way to interact peaceably with each other. While they're working towards a common goal, dragons will willingly call themselves beasts 'of the same den'.

Using the previous metaphor, the Den acts as a federation to individual sovereign states with mutual interests (a group of independent dragons). Forming a Den gives Oroboroi the power to claim a larger geographic region, and more importantly it lets them ask for help. A dragon can trust her Den-mates to at least be civil.

Provinces

The word 'province' comes from the Latin 'provincia' which meant "a territory under Roman domination". In this case, it is used to mean "a territory under Oroboroi domination", and the meaning of territory is loosely applied. A dragon province could be a particular group of professionals, or even a genetic bloodline. For those that take physical provinces, their geographic extent is usually one building or at most one city block.

The province is a dragon's pet project; it gives her something to do as well as a source of accomplishment and pride. The long-term goals of a dragon almost always involve shaping her province and its residents into a form that pleases her. What an Oroboroi may not notice, though, is the way her province shapes her. As she mixes the ingredients of her region, she too breaks apart and becomes amalgamated in the concoction. She picks up traits of her province as it assumes traits from her, and the two become a compromise of their original components.

The province also gives an Oroboroi a direct line to a position of authority, which her Heart demands as a source of fuel. It is one of the primary means through which she will accumulate Breath. After all, a king in rags is no different than a beggar.

Hoard

A modern hoard is usually something to fear. Piles of animal-soiled boxes forming hazardous pathways through dark and musty rooms do not inspire confidence for the image. A hoard to an Oroboros is a different story, however.

It is instinct for a member of the Oroboroi to gather materials of high sentimental and monetary value. This behavior began simply as a consequence of the material gifts a dragon would be

supplied by her worshippers. The world remembers the ideals that were caked on to this notion like so much desert varnish, and so a pile of riches (be it actual gold or simply magnificent pieces) is one of the primary means through which an Oroboros accumulates Breath. A treasury fit for a king.

Maidens

In the stories of dragons there is inevitably a towered princess in need of rescuing. Simple conflict motivation implies the dragon exists solely to serve as a hurdle for the protagonist. But did you ever wonder why dragons collect princesses?

The most intimate form of worship is that that comes from a crushed spirit. The dragons of old, as well as the Oroboroi that replaced them, collect unmarried (also called maidens) to trap them in a life of subservience. It is from this subordination that the dragon draws power; she feeds on the potential that was stifled.

This songbird in a gilded cage complex may seem cruel, but it is important to remember that an Oroboros can no longer be defined as a human being. Many maidens lead very happy lives within the confines of their role as prisoner. How unsavory the situation becomes is really dependent on the Oroboros.

Ideologies

Nobility is a difficult image to live up to. Dragons are creatures of principle and majesty, particularly in their Chinese depictions. They are creatures of rain, obligated to travel the worlds so that crops might prosper. Is it difficult then to believe that a dragon is her own harshest critic?

An Oroboros has high expectations of the world around her, but the highest are the expectations she holds of herself. The faith she holds in herself can prove to be the most invigorating worship an Oroboros can muster. As such, the Oroboroi collect ideologies: sets of moral restrictions which they vow to follow for the purpose of self-satisfaction.

It might seem narcissistic to carry on in this manner, but it is the dedication that fuels the Furnace, not the satisfaction. If an Oroboros is not sufficiently committed to her ideology it will supply her no benefit.

A Dragon's Lair

Though the term is a bit archaic, the lair is a dragon's home. It's where she keeps all of her valuables, the most important one being her Heart. A dragon's lair may or may not be part of her province, but it is usually home to her hoard and maidens.

Most modern Oroboroi don't care for cave life. In fact, they like to live the way they did when they were mortal, or possibly just a smidge more extravagant than that. Lairs run the spectrum from studios to penthouses, and they're indistinguishable from other properties.

Because of her connections to the world soul (the Treasury), a dragon's lair fills up with mysterious energy. Though not immediately apparent, this energy leaves a touch of mysticism behind when a dragon has gone, which may draw the attention of other supernatural beings. It works like creating a magnet; the Oroboros presence polarizes the world around her, and her presence is no greater felt than in the place she resides.

Strangely enough, this aura of magic seems to attract objects of quality, contributing to the size of the dragon's hoard.

Threats

Life as an Oroboroi isn't a safe existence. Despite being a particularly exposed target (standing at the top of a ladder does that), there are a slew of supernatural entities that want nothing more than to harvest a dragon for her flesh, her Heart, or her blood. Potential future dragons, other dragons, human witnesses out for revenge, ancient souls possessing modern forms, forgotten monsters from the deep, and even their own worst fears have something to gain from slaying a dragon.

Obviously a human mortal that knows too much is a threat, as they covet the Heart that makes a dragon special. They are not the only ones that seek Hearts, however. Devourers, or rather Oroboroi that eat dragon Hearts to stoke their Furnace, are a constant and dangerous force in the darkness. Official dragon committees might arrange for a Heart to be 'misplaced' in the hands of a prospective candidate, effectively replacing the previous owner. Then, there are those who wish to snuff out dragon-kind completely, and these predators hunt for Hearts so they can destroy them.

But sometimes, even destroying the troublesome mortal is not enough. If their spirit and

determination is sufficient, their soul will cling to the Treasury until it has the opportunity to latch onto another body. Smothering out the former occupant, these Einherjar can pose a persistent and devastating obstacle for an entire den.

Then there are those that would kill a dragon for her flesh. The first that come to mind are the deep ones, who like the original forgotten deity wish to trade favors for body parts. Something about these creatures is sustained by dragon flesh. Nightmares are hungry for form and substance, something they can acquire through consumption of Oroboros flesh. Finally, some dragons of low mandate have no problem fueling their Furnace with cannibalized flesh, and for this reason they hunt and kill other Oroboroi.

Devourers, the Hydra Phenomenon

Though it is okay to give players a taste of the cannibalistic spiral of Heart consumption, it's not a good idea to let them indulge. Such action would lead to a meteoric, bloody rise to power... one far too swift for the themes of this game.

Be sure to use consequences to discourage becoming a Devourer. Eating another dragon's Heart is both a sin against the mandate and grounds for physical deformation. For each Heart consumed, an Oroboros acquires a deformed patch of skin that resembles part of a human face (a nose, an ear, an eye), and as she manifests her divinities these deformities will literally erupt into heads and announce her crimes. There is more information about this in the second chapter.

Those that Hunt for Heart

The most dangerous of the dragon's enemies, those that hunt for an Oroboroi Heart are out to inflict permanent death. Threats of this manner are always taken seriously, since it only takes one to end a dragon.

Mortals

Likely the biggest danger in the Oroboroi world, a mortal that's done his homework is a ticking roll of dynamite. Intoxicated by the promise of power, he'll stop at nothing to 'join the club'.

Mortals seeking to join have been a problem to the Oroboroi since the Collapse, though only on a personal level. Since consuming a Heart kills a dragon and makes a new one, the Oroboroi

populace as a whole doesn't really care. But... for the dragon replaced it is a very distressing matter indeed.

Mortals are crafty. Those that become Slayers and Challengers may take a direct approach, but Delvers and Grifters almost always strike from the shadows. Besides possibly their demeanor, there is no way to discern a mortal that knows of the Oroboroi from one that does not.

Devourers

Normally a dragon only eats one Heart in her lifetime—that Heart being the one that granted her membership in the Oroboroi. And in that case, the gourmand wasn't actually a dragon at the time. There are always exceptions, though, and those exceptions are the hungry Devourers. Consuming the Hearts of other dragons, they irreparably damage the Oroboroi population.

Devourers are wasteful bastards. Too impatient to stoke their Furnace properly, they dump other Hearts into it like lighter fluid to watch it flare up. For each Heart they devour their Furnace burns more brightly, but their mind slips further into cannibalistic addiction.

Devourers carry the mark of their evil on their body, though sometimes it can be difficult to spot. Each time a devourer consumes another dragon, a piece of her lingers as a tumorous growth somewhere on the devourer's body. Sometimes it's an eye, sometimes an ear, or perhaps the tip of a nose. As the devourer raises his degree of divinity these disembodied features become more pronounced until the head of the victim erupts from his body. These hydra features will usually shout out the devourer's crimes, which is why devourers are hesitant to manifest Ablutions around other Oroboroi. Rightfully so, as the crime is punishable by death.

Many Oroboroi have trust issues with their neighbors for fear of the Devourers, and every single member of dragon-kind hates them. By both stripping an already thin, non-producing population and driving trustworthy dragons apart, Devourers ruin any chance of Oroboroi prosperity.

Conspirators

Like mortals, Oroboroi conspirators are a personal and not a societal threat. Holding themselves on high as judges, conspirators spirit away Hearts and 'gift' them to mortals, with the justification that a better dragon is possible. For dragons that don't

meet the standard of the conspirators, life can become quite a hardship.

Conspirators rarely fight their condemned in open combat, but that doesn't mean they never do. Often they find ways to subcontract Heart location and retrieval, though, so the condemned Oroboroi rarely knows what's coming until she's toast.

There's no way to tell a conspirator from any other dragon. They may even forge Dens, only to snatch away the most precious possession when guards drop. Sometimes a condemned dragon gets lucky and changes the opinion of the undercover conspirator, but such is the exception, not the norm.

Exterminators

Another class of Mortals that know of the Oroboroi condition, but hunt for different purpose, exterminators seek to accelerate the extinction of the species by destroying as many Hearts as possible. Perhaps they blame all Dragonkind for some facet of their lives, or perhaps they simply see the Oroboroi as monsters of the past that are long overdue a visit from the reaper. Regardless of motivation, exterminators are extremely dangerous on both a personal and species-wide level, and so they are dealt with quickly and discreetly.

Thankfully, exterminators are undone by their dedication to the hunt. Their visage quite easily portrays their hate, and their tempers usually drive them to tip their hand too early. Those that know how to be patient, though, are more dangerous than any supernatural threat could ever be.

Einherjar

Even worse than the exterminators are the Einherjar, souls of deceased hunters that have infested the body of another to continue their work. Einherjar are different from ghosts, and their possession crushes the soul of their victim into oblivion. As such, their hold on a body is permanent, so long as the body lasts.

Einherjar defy the cycle of death and rebirth by forcing occupancy in a body rather than being recycled into a new form. As such, their souls are rotten and incapable of maintaining life. The victims they occupy will begin the postmortem process of decay upon occupation, and continue to rot at an expected rate for a corpse until they fail. Regardless of this zombification, the determination of the Einherjar bestows him with superhuman strength and cunning. After all, he has seen the other side of death.

Because of their constant decay Einherjar are easy to spot. Defeating them is another matter entirely, though. Even if the body they have occupied is destroyed, the soul can simply hop into another victim.

Those that Hunt for Flesh

The least dangerous of the entities that hunt a dragon, those that hunt for flesh seek to kill the Oroboros body (and sometimes reap a reward from the carcass). Since dragons resurrect, this is usually just an annoying setback. Still, there are problems associated with dying and most Oroboroi would rather not deal with them. For True Heart dragons, though, those that hunt for flesh are the greatest threat of all.

Deep Ones

Like the first forgotten god that came offering a bargain, there are archaic ocean monsters in the world that trade favors for body parts. Though most common in sea-bordering communities, the deep ones can step into a dragon's presence through the Treasury and often do when they smell profit in an exchange.

Deep Ones seek out dragons that are spiraling out of control, offering clarity in exchange for an emotion. When the dragon agrees to the terms, the deep one helps himself to one of her organs. Both the physical and symbolic representation of the emotion, these organs sustain the deep one in inexplicable ways.

Deep Ones do not need to strike bargains often, but each one they forge makes them stronger and more dangerous. They become bold, more demanding, and in the end when a bargain fails they simply take what they need. Deep Ones are not completely unpredictable, as they approach the dragon directly and their strengths are quite similar to those of the Oroboroi. Still, they are not to be underestimated.

Hydra

Dragons that delve far into the role of devourer forsake their mandate and devolve into horrible monsters. Tales tell of the Hydra burning and devouring everything in their path in an undying rampage. It's all about the next meal for Hydra, and for the Oroboroi whose province they tear through the Hydra poses both a danger to body and a danger to the secrecy of their 'club'.

Hydra aren't particularly bright, as they are too busy bickering with their own heads to make a solid decision. When they attack a dragon it is simply because they're hungry, and dragon flesh burns hottest in the Furnace.

Hydra are the most likely to strike in open combat. They cause a lot of collateral damage, but at their core they're still Oroboroi. A dragon can fight a Hydra with the knowledge he can't do anything she can't do. The only trick is dealing with the unpredictability that comes with a Hydra's insanity.

Nightmares

Sometimes a dragon dies without reason. Sometimes an entity kills a dragon simply because it can. The twisted inhabitants of the Treasury, known as Nightmares, flex their muscles by stepping on dragons.

Nightmares are peculiar entities, made from an amalgamation of an Oroboros' greatest fears. For the most part, dragons encounter Nightmares when they are traveling the Treasury, usually in pursuit of a troublesome Einherjar.

As they are made of fear, the Strength of a Nightmare is equivalent to its Presence and Intelligence. In this way, they are very similar to ghosts, but a standard Nightmare is far more powerful. If a dragon wishes to fight a Nightmare, her best bet is to lure it out of the Treasury and then have her den rip it to pieces.

The Treasury

The original dragons entered the world by descending from the Treasury, the soul of the world. Becoming half-potential and half-material, they were able to invigorate themselves on the hopes and fears of others, much as modern gods are given physical presence from prayer. When the Oroboroi overthrew the original dragons they inherited access to the Treasury, but not the ability to better themselves through the thoughts of their subjects. They were forced to settle on feeding their furnaces with the hopes of the mortals.

The Treasury itself occupies the same physical space as the Daylight, though the rules of space are different within it. An Oroboros may 'dive' into the Treasury by circling, an act of moving or flying in meditative loops.

As for the treasury itself, it is a world of blood and symbolism. The deeper an Oroboros dives the

closer she gets to the core of a soul, an idea, an organization. Small changes to an object in the Treasury translate to tremendous alterations at the level of Daylight. For example, meeting the soul of an organization and slaying it might cause the entire business to collapse. Meeting the soul of an agoraphobic and prying the leeches from his essence might sweep the phobia clean from his personality. The Treasury is a great tool of social change, provided a dragon is willing to brave its hazards.

At opposite ends of the Treasury, the Warrior and the Wyrms can be found. Terribly dangerous conquers and beasts both, each embodies one half of the Oroboros' identity. To slay one or both, if even possible... no one knows just what would happen.

Chapter Two: Character and Systems

“Do you mind explaining to me why a walking corpse had these cards in his pocket?” Cameron flicked the paste-board rectangles towards the desk. They landed face up: the first bearing a hand-drawn picture of a blazing dragon and an address, the second the pristine print of Gringham’s business card. The first was scribbled over her own business card.

“Ah, the Einherjar. Poor man can’t help but fall apart, but you understand, don’t you? Unfinished business goes hand and hand with your type.” He spoke without turning to face her.

“That guy tried to kill me, you know.”

“And he will again. But next time he’ll have a new face.” He snickered. “Isn’t it a pity when you inherit the enemies of your forebears? Like me… I’m sure Ivan neglected to mention me.”

The ‘luxurious’ office chair swiveled around, revealing Frank Gringham.

“Don’t do that, that’s totally lame,” Cameron commented. *“And yes, your name did cross my radar. But I’m not afraid of you. You can’t lie to me.”* She briefly smirked, the power of her proclamation leeching into him.

“I’m afraid you are mistaken. See, I’ve been dealing with your ilk for quite some time, and I know all of your tricks. Why don’t you take a careful look around the room: Notice anything?” She didn’t. The whole office was classy, what she would expect of a powerful businessman.

“There’s nothing off about the room.”

“Ah, but this isn’t my office.” Looking again, she saw the state of the office was a ruse. The chair was pleather, the books cardboard boxes and the desk plywood.

“You’re lying!”

“I can’t lie to you. You said it yourself. In fact, you made sure to proclaim it at the top of your lungs.” Frank pitched his tumbler of brandy at Cameron. Catching it, she sent fractures up its edges and shattered it in a mess of alcohol and broken glass. But when she looked back, Frank was gone. And then she noticed the ticking.

“Oh shit.”

"We're our own dragons as well as our own heroes, and we have to rescue ourselves from ourselves"
—Tom Robbins

This chapter takes an in-depth look into the character construction process and the various systems that set an Oroboros apart from mortals. Included are the five Methods—the means through which a dragon acquires her Heart that colors her approach to a leader's life—and the five Philosophies available to an Oroboros, which define how she rules her province.

What does it mean to be a dragon? By what rules do they judge themselves? They cannot be called human anymore, and some of mortal life's common-sense becomes muddled by the eternity that stretches before an Oroboroi. Also detailed in this chapter is the concept of the dragon's Mandate, and what it means to betray the values of a leader.

Then, of course, there is the matter of resurrection. What happens when a dragon dies? How does her Heart work, and how does her body recover while she's in the space between worlds? Does she come back to life... wrong? What happens after the death of deaths? What is an Antecedent Passenger? All of these questions are answered in this chapter.

Finally, there is the matter of miscellaneous Health concerns. Fossilization is presented in more detail, receiving a conversion from thematic element to mechanical effect. Finally, there is the matter of resistant wounds, which are inflicted in various ways and have different rules for mending. These topics are covered in this chapter.

Character Creation

To build a character you must first invent a concept and then flesh it out with the provided mechanics. Don't try to build somebody that can 'win' a game, strengths and weaknesses can produce a personality for your character that really brings her to life.

It's best to work with both the storyteller and your fellow players during the character creation process to ensure that no game-breaking conflict will develop. While tension between characters can make a game more interesting, personas too incompatible to cooperate undermine the story and may drag conflict back into the real world. Remember the game is about having a good time; if the characters make that impossible it's time to dream up new characters.

In accordance with the **Dark Pack** agreement for fan supplements, the explanations for steps not directly involving the template have been rendered vague so as to require the use of the Core book.

Step One: Character Concept

Before you begin crafting a member of the Oroboroi, you'll need to outline the person she was beforehand by building a concept. Start with the information detailed in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook on page 34 and build from there.

At this point your choice of Method and Philosophy should not play a part in the construction of your concept. Though the character's personality

may influence these selections, they themselves do not and should not define the dragon.

Step Two: Select Attributes

As the concept expands into a fully explored idea, you will begin to wonder what your character is capable of. Is she a mainly physical, social, or mental person? Are her capacities those of power, finesse, or endurance?

Answer these questions by assigning dots to your attributes as dictated on page 34 in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook.

Character-Creation Process

Use the rules from the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, and add the following template to dragon characters during Step Five.

Choose a Method (see page 16-20)

Choose a Philosophy (see page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**-**Error! Bookmark not defined.**)

For beginning Ablutions, place five dots in common Ablutions, three dots in Method Ablutions, and two "free pick" dots in Ablutions from *any* category (see pages **Error! Bookmark not defined.**-**Error! Bookmark not defined.**). For beginning Edicts, place one dot in the Edict specified by your Philosophy, and place another dot in an Edict of your choice.

(see pages **Error! Bookmark not defined.**-**Error! Bookmark not defined.**)

Dragons have access to Merits specially designed for them (see page 12-15)

Morality is now called Mandate (see page 32)

If you want to create a Dragon-born, bonded, or pilot light character, you may do so with the Storyteller's approval. Identical to the process for making mortals, follow the rules detailed in the **World of Darkness Rulebook** and purchase the corresponding Merit. Bonded and pilot light characters will need to use the sheet from this book, and will have to pick Ablutions (Unless they are associated with another player).

Step Three: Select Skills

Whereas Attributes cover a character's capacity, Skills cover her training and experience. Skills are divided into physically challenging pursuits, intellectual endeavors, and social practices. Again, ask yourself where your character's talents lie, within the scope of her human life, and then distribute skills accordingly as described on page 34 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**.

Step Four: Select Skill Specialties

You should already be familiar with Specialties from page 54 of the **World of Darkness Rulebook**. Try to use them as ways of defining a character's professional focus, and remember that you are also allowed to assign specialties that reflect supernatural purviews. A specialty like "Biological" under the Weaponry skill is perfectly acceptable.

Step Five: Add Dragon Template

With one act of pseudo-cannibalism your character ceases to be human and becomes something *else*. Whether that's a good thing is something to be questioned, but there are advantages to holding such power.

No character can possess multiple supernatural templates. While a character may be able to maintain abilities from her human life, other supernatural features are purged when she joins the Oroboroi. Only mortals may become dragons.

Method

The means by which a dragon came upon her Heart color the flame of her Furnace, and likewise the cut of her personality. Though the Method does not

control how a dragon acts, dragons of a certain Method can be expected to behave in a certain way. After all, it takes a type to do things that way.

A Method makes certain Ablutions more readily available, those that fit the theme of the means. At least three dots of the starting ten allotted to Ablutions at character creation must be spent within the dragon's method. A Method also affects how an Oroboros perceives the world around her; each method has a sense elevated above the others. Finally, Methods give the Oroboros a preternatural advantage; each gives a free dot to one of three attributes.

Philosophies

Philosophies define how a dragon approaches her province. When a dragon assumes her role as leader, her Philosophy tells her what kind of state she will run. Schools of Philosophy instruct an Oroboros on the best ways to handle self-sustenance, resource management, division of labor, and resolution of conflict.

Though a dragon may find herself a follower of many beliefs, the one held closest to her heart is that of her philosophy, and when a conflict of ethics occurs she will turn to her philosophy for guidance. Choosing a philosophy is a very personal matter; usually all of the variables are internal. A select few join philosophies due to external pressure, but such decision usually backfires in the dragon's future.

In addition, philosophies grant an Oroboros a gateway to tap into their role as forces of nature. Philosophies grant an Oroboros authority which in turn may be levied against reality as a type of Edict.

Check the philosophies on pages **Error! Bookmark not defined.** through 29 and pick one that fits your character's mindset. If you have trouble, ask your Storyteller or the other players for their opinion. And remember that a philosophy is simply a guideline to province structure; it is never wrong to deviate from these norms.

Furnace

Sometimes a measure of age and sometimes a measure of stature is your character's Furnace. The Furnace is a fire at the core of every dragon; a steam engine that allows them to exist. A bigger Furnace means a heartier dragon, who has more thoroughly embraced her new nature. Dragons with higher Furnace manifest Ablutions more quickly, can spend more Breath at once, and proclaim Edicts with

greater force. Dragons with low Furnace are slow to take their True Form, struggle tapping into their Breath reserves, and declare Edicts with little breadth or function.

All dragons receive one free dot of Furnace at character creation. Furnace can be increased with Merit dots at that time, at a rate of three Merit dots to one dot of Furnace. This places a limit of Furnace 3 at character creation. More on Furnace can be found on page 10.

Breath

A measure of the dragon's energy, Breath not only fuels certain Ablutions, it is refined to bring material force to Edicts. A dragon with high breath is capable of belching waves of flame, using complex combinations of Edicts, and cauterizing severe injury. A dragon with low Breath is soon a dragon with no Breath; it's incredibly important.

Breath is tied to the things an Oroboros cares about; her maidens, provinces, and hoards. When she reflects on these things, her heart rate increases and subsequently fuels the Furnace. As such, Breath differs from the energy sources of other creatures of the night in that it is directly tied to the relationships a dragon has with her precious things. These sources, henceforth referred to as **assets**, have dot ratings which refer to their maximum capacity. The specifics of this system is detailed later in the chapter; for now know that starting dragons have nine dots to distribute amongst assets of their choosing, with the number of dots representing the depth of the relationship shared with that asset. Dragons begin play with half the full allotment of Breath affiliated with their assets, distributed amongst them as they please. It is also important to note that the dragon's Heart is always an asset; its Breath and limits as an asset are displayed in the boxes beneath the character's dots of Furnace.

Breath must be spent each day with the dragon's first meal to stave off fossilization (See page 41 in Chapter 4), the amount of which varying based on how high she raised her degree of divinity the previous day. Breath changes as your character lives from day to day, performs certain aspects of her duties, makes proclamations with Edicts, or uses certain Ablutions. It is described in full on page 11.

There are limits on Breath expenditure per turn and Breath storage, the former determined by the dragon's Furnace and the latter by her relationships with the world around her.

Ablutions

When a dragon undergoes her Coronation, she acquires a number of "divinities" (as the Oroboroi call them) that define her draconic state. Traits, or features, or rather Ablutions as they are most commonly called, all grant a biological boost to the would-be Oroboros. A starting dragon begins play with ten Ablutions. Five must be drawn from the Common Ablution lists, three must be drawn from the list associated with the dragon's Method, and two can be freely taken from any list (Even a list associated with a different Method).

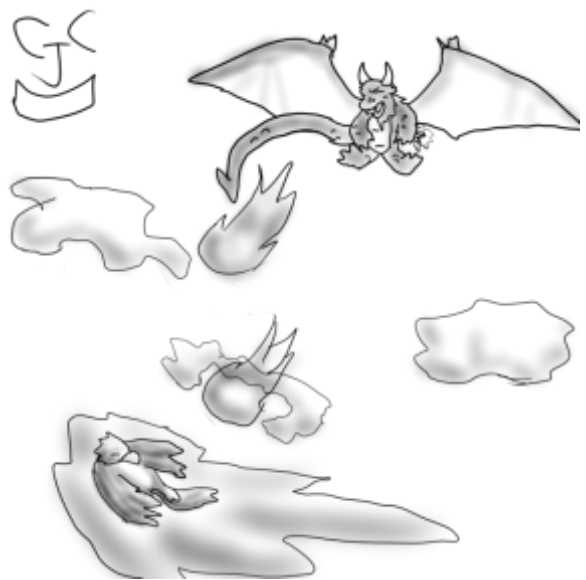
Ablutions are explored in further detail on pages **Error! Bookmark not defined.** **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

Edicts

Edicts are ideas given form by force of will, burned onto the real world with a blast of Breath. They are the only potency dragons do not draw from their own genetic structure; they are the power of thought. Oroboroi start with only two Edicts, the first level associated with their Philosophy, and one level from any Edict of their choice.

It is possible to start with two levels of a single Edict, provided it's the Edict associated with the character's Philosophy. For more on Edicts, see page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**

A starting dragon also selects a single ordinance to accompany one of her Edicts. The ordinance will boost the effect rating when it applies.



Step Six: Select Merits

All characters begin play with several dots of Merits, which should be chosen with the same care you used when selecting Skills. Merits should fit the character, not your battle plan. See the **World of Darkness** Rulebook (page 108) for more information, and see pages 12-15 of this book for Merits specifically Oroboroi in design.

Step Seven: Determine Advantages

Most of the advantages dragons receive are identical to those found in Chapter 4 of the **World of Darkness** Rulebook. One advantage in particular differs significantly, however.

Mandate

A set of regulations for being an effective leader and Oroboros is the psychological baggage ingrained in the Heart. Becoming a member of the Oroboroi involves a ripening of the soul (in both connotations), and certain things grow to be... trivial. People become expendable, no more significant than any other possession. Not all dragons feel this way, but their soul is no worse for wear acting on that concept. And not all dragons are instantly aware of the changes that have embraced them.

In truth, the Heart is testing its new owner, assessing if she is worthy to carry the power. If it finds her wanting, it will abandon her. The Mandate is a set of simple rules, but it is not forgiving like Morality. Repeatedly breaking the same tenet of Oroboroi life is grounds for rejection, and Mandate does not recover without serious dedication (the expenditure of experience). Mandate replaces Morality.

Optionally (at Storyteller discretion) a character may start with a reduced Mandate rating in exchange for bonus experience and assets. Each point of Mandate sacrificed grants 5 additional

experience and 2 dots of assets. Note that such a sacrifice cannot lower Mandate below five.

[GMC] Sacrificing Mandate gives two experience per dot.

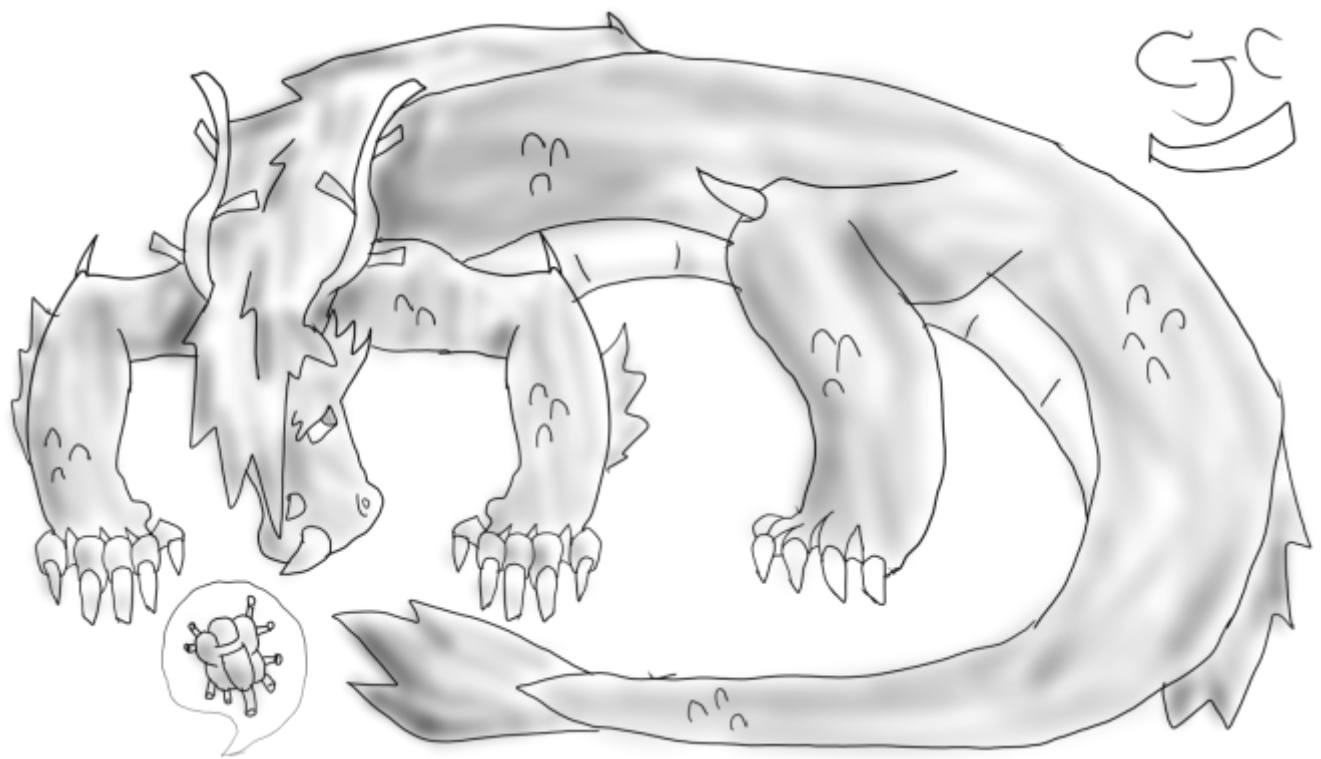
For more information on the Draconic Mandate, see page 32.

Step Eight: Spark of Life

With the muck of the character sheet out of the way, it's time to make your character as real as possible. Why did you choose the traits you did? Is there a story behind that extra dot of Resolve? Did your character go to college for those ratings in Academics, or was she a self-inspired bookworm? Try to come up with a reason for your trait choices. In fiction everything revealed about a character has at least some degree of significance, and it is your job to create those degrees. That is the Spark of Life. A character with a well-defined background is more 'alive' than one that is just an assortment of features. It is essential to remember that, in the end, the story is more important than the stats.

With that in mind, consider some of the physical characteristics your character exhibits. What does she look like? What are her features like when she sports her Ablutions? What would she look like if she were to attain the form of a True dragon? The Ablutions give a guideline for physical tells, but don't let that limit you. Try to create a picture of your creation in your mind. If you're good with a sketchbook, draw her out. The more you do while creating the character, the more attached you will become and the more real she will be.

Physical stature is not the only component of appearance. How does your character carry herself? Act at a party? Is the world revolving around her, or the other way around? What kind of clothes does she wear? What's her favorite food? Color? Branch of Government? Okay, so that last one was a joke, but you get the idea.



Character Creation Quick Reference

This reference is used with the one provided on page 34 of the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, can be utilized to quickly and easily follow the steps of creating a Dragon character.

Method

Choose the Method through which your character obtained her Heart. There are five Methods available.

Slayer (The Rabid Monster): violent, forceful, impatient; **+1 Physical Attribute**

Delver (The Inquisitive Monster): curious, determined, driven; **+1 Mental Attribute**

Challenger (The Devoted Monster): skilled, tactful, arrogant; **+1 Resistance Attribute**

Grifter (The Noxious Monster): deceitful, cunning, treacherous; **+1 Finesse Attribute**

Inheritor (The Entitled Monster): favored, pompous, ambitious; **+1 Social Attribute**

Philosophy

Choose the frame of thought that your character follows. Five philosophies are available.

Imperator (Dictator): military general, emphasis on Hoard

Paragon (Idol): leader by example, emphasis on Province

Savant (Mentor): professor and mentor, emphasis on Maidens

Vizier (Comrade): power behind the throne, emphasis on Ideologies

Caitiff (Coward): wanderers, emphasis on balance **+1 to Husbandry Edict**

Furnace

The default Furnace rating of an Oroboroi character is one dot. Three Merit dots may be exchanged to increase this rating by one, resulting in Furnace 2 for three Merit dots or Furnace 3 for six Merit dots.

Assets

A starting character begins play with 9 dots of assets. Starting assets may not be more than five dots. The character's Furnace also counts as an asset, and for every point of Mandate the character sacrificed at creation she acquires two more dots of assets.

Breath

An Oroboroi character begins play with a number of points of Breath equal to half the capacity of her assets, rounded down. These points may be distributed as the player wishes.

Merits

Dragon Merits include Graft (● to ●●●●●), Language: Draconic (● to ●●●), and Lair (varies; special).

Normal human characters, but not dragons, can take the Dragon-Born (●● to ●●●●), Bond of Brood (●●●●●), Sparti(●●●), or Pilot Light (●●●●●) Merits.

Experience Point Costs

<i>Trait</i>	<i>Cost (Standard)</i>	<i>Cost (GMC)</i>	<i>Cost (MCBs)</i>
Attribute	New dots x 5	4 Experiences per dot	5 per dot
Skill	New dots x 3	2 Experiences per dot	2 per dot
Skill Specialty	3	1 Experience	1
Common Ablution	New dots x 5	3 Experiences per dot	3 per dot
Method Ablution	New dots x 5	3 Experiences per dot	3 per dot
Non-Method Ablution	New dots x 6	4 Experiences per dot	4 per dot
Primary Edict	New dots x 10	6 Experiences per dot	10 per dot
Ancillary Edict	New dots x 12	7 Experiences per dot	12 per dot
Ordinance	4	1 Experience	1
Merit	New dots x 2	1 Experience per dot	1 per dot
Furnace	New dots x 8	5 Experience per dot	8 per dot
Mandate	New dots x 3	2 Experience per dot	3 per dot
Willpower*	8	1 Experience per dot	8 per dot
Health*	8	1 Experience per dot	4 per dot

*Only to recover dots lost during gameplay

Prelude

An optional private session between player and Storyteller, the Prelude is a chance to explore your character's life *before* induction as an Oroboroi. Think of it as a test drive, to see how your skill and attribute choices fit, and how your creation reacts under different forms of pressure. It also lets you explore the reasoning behind your character's method.

A prelude doesn't necessarily have to run like a normal session. It can be used as a brainstorm to develop a rich past for the character, a pre-emptive exposure to the system if you're a new player, or even just a warm-up for a new or out-of-practice Storyteller. Nothing on your sheet is concrete during the prelude; if during the course of it you find your character has greater bursts of mental prowess but is more flexible in abandoning her principles, you may wish to move a point of Resolve to Intelligence. These tweaks are acceptable, but it's best to do it before the chronicle begins.

Preludes can also be run with the entire group simultaneously, but it may become more hectic than expected. If the Storyteller prefers, two sets of pre-chronicle sessions could be held, one on the individual level and one regarding the troupe's union as an Oroboroi Den.

Example of Character Creation

After reading this book, Frank wants to take over his gaming troupe's World of Darkness campaign, which had disbanded a few weeks before at the end of the last chronicle. He decides to reuse the setting from the previous game, but have each player create a new character. All of the players are familiar with the setting, as it is being recycled. With this, Frank states that the characters can use any reasonable concept, so long as they have not possessed their Oroboroi Heart for more than a year. Jesse comments in jest about playing a serial killer, but to his surprise Frank explains that could be a viable concept. Intrigued, Jesse decides to elaborate.

Step One: Concept

Jesse's character is likely going to be a mixer in the group, so Frank demands a concept that the other players approve. Jesse's first attempt, "Creepy Janitor", was rejected as being hackneyed and stereotypical. "Philanthropic Doctor with a dark secret" fared a little better, but Frank decided to veto it for his own reasons. Finally, Jesse settles on

"Sinister Bartender" and refuses to budge. The other players don't mind, though, as they think it'd work well with their concepts.

With the basic concept, Jesse begins to flesh out his character's background. He determines the Bartender started his business as a vain attempt to shake his own addictions, but as the booze left his system he found... other outlets for his stress.

Step Two: Attributes

Despite being a veteran player, Jesse goes back to the **World of Darkness** Rulebook to quickly review the scales of the attributes. He may know the systems they're plied toward, but having most recently played a much more powerful being he can't quite remember where an average human should rate. Refreshed, he decides to stick with social and mental attributes. This he justifies with the belief that serial murder is a matter of control, not immediate power. As long as he gets the jump on his victim, everything will go to plan.

Presence 1, Manipulation 3, Composure 4.

Intelligence 2, Wits 3, Resolve 2.

Strength 1, Dexterity 3, Stamina 2.

Step Three: Skills

Jesse once more references the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, specifically the summary of the Medicine skill. Not finding what he wants, he flips back to the Academics skill, but it's not there either. He decides to ask Frank whether knowledge of poisons would fall under Academics or Medicine, and Frank deems that Medicine is the correct Skill. With this knowledge in hand, Jesse explains that the source of the Bartender's original addiction (the alcoholism, not the murder) was the immense stress of pre-med college, to such a degree that he never finished his schooling. Despite being a drop-out, the Bartender still retains his extensive knowledge of science and medicine, as well as a great degree of academic prowess. His recent foray into bartending has granted him a slight knowledge of local politics, simply from the force of complaint. Also, as a listening board and penny-jar psychiatrist, the bartender has acquired a wide variety of training in the field of social interaction. Finally, to function as a successful serial killer the bartender has picked up the basics of Larceny and Stealth, as well as a little practice with Weaponry.

Academics 3, Medicine 4, Politics 1, and Science 3.

Empathy 1, Expression 1, Intimidation 1, Persuasion 1, Socialize 1, Streetwise 1, and Subterfuge 1.

Larceny 1, Stealth 2, and Weaponry 1.

Step Four: Skill Specialties

Medicine, "Toxins"

Science, "Anatomy"

Weaponry, "Knives"

Step Five: Dragon Template

Here the character creation process begins to flow a little less smoothly. Jesse has not played **Dragon the Embers** before, and so he is not very familiar with the rules involved. Frank explains that it is mostly like the other supernatural templates, but Jesse requests access to the **Dragon** book anyway.

The first choice to be made is method. Jesse flips forward to page 16 and quickly skims the five available methods, settling on Grifter as it feels the most appropriate for his sinister Bartender. He tells Frank that his character acquired the Heart several days after cleaning up one of his 'projects', as it sat unharmed in the incinerator when he dumped the personal supplies. Frank says that would be closer to the Delver method, but considering the means through which the Dragon was disposed he makes an exception. Jesse is given the option to boost a finesse attribute and he chooses Manipulation, raising it to 4.

Next, Jesse must choose a philosophy. Frank mentions that since a bartender has fleeting actions with a wide variety of people, a province-based Breath system would be best suited to his needs. As such, he recommends the Paragon philosophy. Jesse takes a look. After briefly comparing it to the other philosophies, he agrees that it's the best fit for the Bartender. The Wood Edict will start with a single dot because of this decision, but that comes later.

Furnace is up next. All **Dragon** characters automatically possess one dot in this trait, but it can be increased at a rate of one Furnace dot for every three Merit dots sacrificed. Jesse feels his bartender will need all the Merits he can muster, so he decides to leave the Furnace rating at 1.

Next, Jesse must determine his Bartender's starting Breath. To do this involves determining his starting Assets, and since lowered Mandate results in additional starting Assets Jesse flips forward to

read about the system. Deciding that he's not the best leader in the world but hasn't completely abandoned his responsibility, Jesse decides to lower his starting mandate by one, acquiring five experience and two extra dots of Assets.

Frank explains that the Asset system is significantly different from the energy source that their previous template utilized; replenishing Breath is dependent on spending time with a treasured Asset, which in turn is more freeform than the mechanics of the other lines. He shows Jesse the full descriptions of each Asset and the meaning of the dot ratings listed further in Chapter Two and asks him to think this over while he works with the other players.

The first choice is easy. The Bartender clearly cares deeply about his business. Jesse considers pouring five of the eleven assets (counting the two from selling mandate) he has available into his bar, but then decides that the 5 dot description of use has too large a scope for his character. He settles on 4 dots.

Jesse decides that he'd like to give the Bartender an ideology as an Asset. Secretly he believes he'll be able to exploit it for cheap and easy Breath replenishment, so he asks Frank if he can have "Commit Murder" as an Ideology. Frank explains that the idea doesn't really fit with the spirit of the rules, and instead suggests something that will give the Bartender room for growth: "Twelve Steps". Frank writes it on the sheet with 2 dots dedicated.

Jesse then moves on the Maidens. He finds the concept of deliberately sabotaging the lives of his regulars fascinating. However, he doesn't see the character going out of his way to keep them, so he takes three maidens at one dot each. He lists the problems each regular suffers in parentheses next to their name so that Frank can bring up these issues in-session.

With two dots of Assets left Jesse must choose between tacking on another Province or Ideology or picking a Hoard. He decides the Bartender is dedicated to his business, to the point wherein he cannot focus on a secondary Province. Thinking on the issue, he decides the Bartender would struggle with parting with his booze. As such, he assigns the last two dots of Asset to a Tequila Hoard.

Assets

Maidens:

Kilik [Marital Problems] 1,

Thomas [Out of Control Teenage Daughter] 1,

Victoria [Medical Issues] 1
Hoards:
Tequila 2
Provinces:
Rotten Luck Bar 4
Ideologies:
Twelve Steps 2
Heart 1

With the Assets determined Jesse is able to determine his starting Breath, which is six points. He places them in his three maidens, his Heart, and in his Ideology, as he feels the Province and Hoard Assets will be easy to refresh. Frank takes a mental note of this hubris and plans to teach him a lesson accordingly.

On to Ablutions. Jesse has five dots for Common Ablutions, three dots for Grift Ablutions, and two dots to place where he pleases. Inferno 1, Impervious Hide 1, Chimeric Sense 1, Chameleon Hide 1, Obsidian Fog 1, and Vile Humours 1 are his five picks from Common Ablutions. Venoms 3 is his pick for all three Grift options. Finally, Tactful Precision 1 from the Delve Ablutions and Impassioned Effort 1 from the Challenge Ablutions are his two free picks. Jesse pictures the True Form of his sinister Bartender as a lurking beast, waiting in the darkness to strike.

Finally, the last application of the Oroboroi template is the selection of Edicts. Only two dots are available, and one is already designated for the Wood Edict due to Jesse's Philosophy selection. He decides to place the other dot in Wood as well, since it presents more immediate utility than the first level of a different Edict, and chooses the Bloom Law. As such, he begins play with two Laws, Veto and Bloom.

Step Six: Merits

Jesse starts with the dragon-specific ones in this book. He decides that the Bartender likely would not possess a Graft. Lair intrigues him, though. He dedicates two dots to the sinister Bartender's Lair Merit, converting the local watering hole into a safe haven with minimal security and size. Anything more extravagant would likely draw too much attention from his patrons, but even the Bartender is not immune to the Heart-oriented paranoia of the Oroboroi. Also, considering so many of his assets revolve around the building he feels safer for the protection. Jesse also considers the Draconic merit,

but decides the Bartender would never be intrigued enough to study ancient dragon lore.

So he turns back to the **World of Darkness** Rulebook. Jesse sees Barfly as a perfect fit. Contacts (the Downtrodden) is also a perfect fit with both the Lair and his profession. This causes him to reconsider the Lair Merit, and he decides to apply more dots to it: One of these increases the size of the location again, making for a more sprawling bar-scene. The remaining two go to security, improving the means through which he conceals his Heart and his illicit activities. Jesse explains that he hid the trap-door to his basement and incinerator by disguising it as a secondary floor safe (with the key resting safely around his neck) and tucking it under a rug behind the bar. He also keeps the best of his collection within.

Step Seven: Advantages

Jesse's sinister Bartender is almost complete mechanically. He need simply assign a Virtue and Vice, mark down his Mandate, and determine his derived traits.

Jesse has already decided the Bartender's Vice is Gluttony. Too long has addiction plagued him in his vain attempt to escape his own life. Deep down he hates himself for being so flawed, so he looks for answers at the bottom of a bottle. At least he did until he started looking for them at the back of somebody's intestines. Despite the sickly degenerated shell of a man the Bartender has become, he still dreams of kicking his need for addiction. Jesse declares the Bartender's Virtue is Hope. Jesse has already sold a dot of the Bartender's Mandate, so it starts at 6. Frank doesn't ask for justification as this sacrifice makes sense for a serial killer.

Now Jesse must calculate and mark down the Bartender's other traits. He has 7 Health dots (Stamina 2 + Size 5), 6 Willpower Dots (Resolve 2 + Composure 4), a Defense of 3 (Whichever is the lower of Dexterity and Wits. In the case of the Bartender, they are tied at 3), an Initiative Mod of 7 (Dexterity 3 + Composure 4), and a Speed of 9 (Strength 1 + Dexterity 3 + 5). Attributes and the traits that are defined by them can be modified by Ablutions and Degree of Divinity, but that's easy enough to track on the sheet.

Step Eight: Spark of Life

Jesse’s Bartender needs a name. He decides to be a smart-ass, so using a random number generator he tries to invent one. The luck of the draw gives him a four-letter name with two vowels and two consonants, and those turn out to be “u” “e” “k” and “x”. Xuke. Frank says it’s a little funky, but considering a name that sounds even remotely cool came out of a random number generator, he lets Jesse use it with a spelling change. “Zuke” becomes the last name of the Bartender, and vicariously his nickname. Zuke needs a first name, though, and Jesse decides to go with Damian.

Damian Zuke, sinister Bartender of the Rotten Luck, looks to be in his mid-thirties, though he’s actually twenty-seven. Spiraling down the drain of alcoholism, Zuke purchased his bar from its previous owner in a vain attempt to fill his need for booze vicariously through his patrons. As the liquor left his system a hole remained, and in a scuffle against a rowdy patron that hole found a new plug.

Zuke needs to kill frequently or he begins to go into withdrawal. Because of this, he will begin play with the Addiction flaw. This need is rooted in his soul, an impulse to deaden his feelings of self-loathing. He acquired his Oroboros Heart and became a Grifter because of this addiction; one of the lingering patrons he vanquished had it in her possession, and he discovered it as he burned her effects in the bar’s furnace. The sickly sweet smell of the fireproof flesh overpowered Zuke’s inhibitions, and he fetched it from the flames, swallowing it immediately.

Despite becoming supernatural, Zuke’s life did not really change much. His methods of dealing with prey had been enhanced, but overall he is the same monster. In fact, his targets were indiscriminate until a conniving Imperator (one of the other players) made a deal. She would supply him with trace-free targets in exchange for

friendship and favors. Little does Zuke know these targets are actually unfavorable residents of the Imperator’s Province.

Frank says it sounds like a great start. He reclaims the books from Jesse so that he can help the other players make their characters.

Traits

The nine-chambered heart sets dragons apart from standard mortals, both in immense physical prowess and in longevity.

New Advantage: Furnace

Burn hot, burn bright, and keep burning. That’s the cornerstone of life in the Oroboroi. To combat the cold world of politics and secrecy, dragons store their fuel-source at the core of their body. The Furnace gauges the control a dragon holds over her own body and the influence she can bring to bear in the world around her. The heat of the Furnace gives force to a dragon’s Edicts, it incinerates the supernatural before it reaches her person (see the “Supernatural Conflict” sidebar on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**). It also serves to provide malleability to her body, accelerating the manifestation of her divinities.

All dragon characters begin play with one dot of Furnace. This value may be increased during character creation at a rate of 1 Furnace dot for every 3 Merit points spent, with a maximum starting Furnace of 3. High Furnace at game’s start comes with strings attached: the Oroboros has given up something to increase the potency of her fire, something which she may or may not regret. Thus you must discuss with the Storyteller before making such a purchase. In addition, building Furnace beyond character creation is itself an ordeal.

The Furnace is located next to the Heart, in the

Effects of Furnace

Furnace	Attribute/Skill Maximum	Max Breath per Turn	Furnace Bandwidth	Heartbeat	Typhoon Severity
1	5	1	1	0	0
2	5	2	1	+1	0
3	5	2	2	+1	0
4	5	3	2	+2	1
5	5	3	3	+2	1
6	6	4	3	+3	1
7	7	5	4	+3	2
8	8	7	5	+4	2
9	9	10	7	+4	3
10	10	15	10	+5	4

former position of the left lung. This is the reason for much of the agony of the Coronation; the Furnace literally incinerates one of the new Oroboros' internal organs. For the Furnace to grow in power, it must either be given space to expand or given fuel to burn more efficiently. The latter is the way of the Devourer: each Heart consumed increases the temperature of the burn and thus increases Furnace by 1. There are consequences for each Heart consumed after the first, explained in the section about Devourers on page **XX**.

Still, the alternative also bears its share of horror. Without the fuel to raise the temperature of the Furnace, the Oroboros must make room for it in her chest cavity. This involves vomiting up an organ and—with it—a piece of her soul. Organ removal, emotion loss, and bargains can be found on page **XX**.

With the growth of Furnace comes swifter access to Breath. Furnace ratings of 6 or higher also increase the limit of Attributes and Skills to legendary limits. The sheer force or volume of the Furnace gives the Oroboros the ability to permanently alter her physique and—vicariously—her social and mental prowess to indescribable heights.

Furnace also determines the amount of Bandwidth a dragon has to dedicate to Ablutions. A low-Furnace body can only process physical reconstructions slowly, a few points at a time. A high-Furnace body, conversely, can manifest a wider array of synchronized draconic features simultaneously. To exceed this bandwidth is to suffer terrible injury. This system is explained in more detail in Chapter 3, starting on page **Error!**
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Heartbeat

Dragons are hopelessly paranoid, and with good reason. If anyone happens across their most valuable possession (with knowledge of its purpose) it would be the end of them. The Furnace does not make it any easier on the poor monsters. As it increases in intensity, its spectral connection to the Heart forces the disembodied organ to work harder to maintain core temperature. The Heart beats louder and louder as the Furnace grows hot, and soon it is even audible from a distance. Anyone listening for subtle sounds in the vicinity of the Heart gains a bonus to hear it based on the Heartbeat rating that corresponds to its owner's Furnace rating.

For example, a dragon with Furnace 4 has a Heart that beats with such intensity that a listener in proximity receives +2 to rolls while trying to detect it. What horror an Oroboroi must feel when even *she* can hear the Heart beating?

Typhoon

Another unfortunate side-effect of high-Furnace is the phenomenon known as Typhoon. As the light of an Oroboros grows she begins to have more and more impact on the environment around her. An emotional outburst thus has an impact on the weather: a storm follows her break, bearing a potency based on the severity of her typhoon effect. The full extent of this phenomenon is described later in this chapter, on page **XX**.



New Advantage: Breath

The Furnace generates heat, but the application of that heat produces Breath. Though in its unrefined form Breath is just a mass of flame and electricity, it can be subconsciously reassigned to different forms of energy, often bringing the impossible into reality by force-of-will.

Breath is the points that are associated with an Oroboros' various Assets. Like Willpower points, Breath may be spent to achieve a variety of functions. Unlike Willpower, however, Breath usage is limited by Furnace and its recovery is based on refreshing an Asset. Breath may be expended to:

- Stave off Fossilization. An amount of Breath equal to the highest Degree of Divinity attained the previous day must be spent before the first meal of the following day to keep the Furnace stoked. If the Oroboros skimps on the payment, she suffers the effects of fossilization for each point she owed and did not pay. For information on Fossilization, look on page **XX** later in this chapter.
- Gather forging points to assume Ablutions as a reflexive action instead of a reforging action. Ablution mechanics are explained in detail in Chapter 3 (page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**).
- Power Edicts. The available Edicts can be found on pages **Error! Bookmark not defined.-Error! Bookmark not defined.**
- Recover a single point of bashing damage.
- Recover a single point of lethal damage when used in conjunction with another point (In other words, it takes two Breath to remove one lethal wound).
- Give a boost in effectiveness to an Ablution.
- Make an Edict proclamation more potent.
- Protect gear and clothes from the wear and tear caused by Ablutions (for one scene).
- Brand a piece of property.

There are two major ways to recover spent points of Breath, both involving Assets. These are explained in greater detail in the section on Assets, as written on page **XX** later in this chapter.

- Refresh an Asset through an appropriate interaction with it.
- Refresh an Asset by consuming livestock or human beings.

Merits

All modern dragons began as humans, so they are entitled to any Merits that a normal human could have. They must still meet the same requirements, but such Merits are not stripped away from them when they join the Oroboroi. In fact, the only merits they can lose from Heart consumption are those that specify they are incompatible with supernatural

templates. It is important to note that Ablutions do not help with meeting prerequisites. The complexity of having access to an ability only when a certain combination of dragon traits are manifest would cause a slew of problems in the long run, so all Merits are limited by the Mortal Coil and not the True Form.

Below are Merits specifically designed for dragons and the mortals with whom they interact.

Graft (• to •••••)

Effect: Your dragon begins play with a Graft, a boney clasp of unique utility that is explained in further detail on page **43**. These dreadful devices are created by erasing the body and soul of a mortal, though your character may not be aware of the object's origins. In all likelihood, the Graft was a spoil of war or a lucky find, and its nature and function remain a mystery to her.

The Graft Merit may be taken multiple times to signify different Grafts, but the sum of its ratings cannot exceed 5 at character creation (So you could have a 4 dot Graft and a 1 dot Graft, or two 2 dot Grafts and a 3 dot Graft, but never a 5 dot Graft and a 1 dot Graft).

Sparti (• to •••)

Character Creation Only

Prerequisite: Non-Dragon character.

Effect: Lay a dragon's tooth in the ground as a seed, and from the earth sprouts a man, fully grown and fully capable, armed for battle. Such is the myth, anyway. There is a kernel of truth to the story.

Indeed, planting the tooth of a dragon in fertile soil will spawn a human being, of adult capability and intelligence. This new life is in possession of the power of Edicts, she may learn them up to a maximum proficiency equal to the dots owned in this merit. In addition, the skill of the source dragon bleeds into the Sparti; she has three extra specialties that match the dragon whose tooth created her.

Drawback: The character has simply sprung into existence, fully grown. She has no Social Security Number, no job history, no credit rating, no birth certificate, no outside knowledge. To the modern world she does not exist. Socially she is as fresh as a newborn child, and is likely to believe anything and everything she hears. She is inescapably loyal to the first person she meets and, if she is not

enslaved in their service, she is completely without identity and must build one from scratch.

Lair (Varies; Special)

Effect: Dragons need a place to keep all their treasure, including the Heart. The Lair is a dragon's home, where she can wait out the heat of a bad situation or relax knowing her Heart is secure. For many dragons it's a place where they can be themselves, without fear of exposure.

Multiple dragons can go in on this merit, each contributing dots on their individual sheet. Dots in the Lair Merit can be spent to increase size or security. For staff, see the Servants merit.

[GMC] A Lair must be tied to a Safe Place Merit (page 170 in the **God Machine Chronicles** Rulebook), and can be shared by a Den. Each member that wishes to benefit must invest at least one Merit dot in both the Safe Place and Lair Merits.

Size:

A single dot in Size completely negates the Heartbeat bonus for people who are outside the Lair, although it still applies if someone is searching for the Heart within. Size also raises the limits on housing Maidens and Hoards.

0: A hole in the ground or a broom closet. It can be used for hiding the Heart, but not much else.

1: A small one-room apartment; it can house a fully transformed dragon, or a few mortals, or a 4 dot Hoard, but not all of these at once.

2: A small house, with three to four rooms. Has enough space for everything, and can even handle one 5 dot Hoard.

3: A warehouse or a small farm. Fully transformed dragons are able to fight here without having to worry about collateral damage or detection. It can easily house the whole party and all their belongings, including several maidens and even Hoards of tremendous size.

4: A large mansion or base. There is not only enough room for the entire Den and their possessions, but for dozens other servants and followers as well.

5: An incredible underground cavern system, or a building the size of an Opera House. More dragons that might even exist in the country could be brought together here, and massive aerial battles can take place as if they happened out in the open.

Security:

Security grants two major bonuses. First, it subtracts its dot rating from all attempts to locate the Lair, as well as attempts to locate the Heart once within. Second, the dot rating is subtracted from all attempts to enter the Lair. The owner can define the type of the protection that applies, which defines the options available to someone seeking to intrude.

Servants (• to •••••)

Effect: A ruler requires courtiers - clerks, guards, or advisors. In the modern nights, the 'servants' are usually paid employees that work for a dragon in exchange for a salary, although they may just as well be a cult that deifies the dragon, a political conspiracy, or a club.

Servants assist with the dragon's daily affairs, like any other employee might. On extended tasks in which the servants may assist, the Oroboros may choose to add the number of dots in Servants to her rolls. Servants also have a specialty, determined at the time of purchase of the merit. When assisting the dragon in their field of expertise, the bonus supplied is doubled (so Servants 4 gives +8 to extended rolls when assisting with an effort that falls within their field).

Conversely, the dragon may use their numbers as shifts to counteract the effects of fatigue. If she treats the rating of the merit as three dots lower, she may completely negate the successive penalties suffered during extended actions, as well as triple the attempt limit.

Servants are not automatons, and so must have some reason to remain in the dragon's employ. Perhaps that reason is promise of power or divine worship (or perhaps even desperation caused by the Miasma). Regardless, if mistreated the servants may part from their master, resulting in the loss of this Merit.

Dragon-Born (•• to ••••)

Character Creation Only

Prerequisite: Non-dragon character.

Effect: Though dragons are incapable of producing draconic offspring, they can still breed with mortals. Children born of one Oroboroi parent are natural leaders, though they aren't particularly supernatural.

Dragon-Born begin play with one extra Skill dot and one extra specialty per dot owned in this Merit. They are better prepared for dragonhood when they

reach maturity, in that they gain a general sense of what it means to be a dragon, what dragons are capable of, and their bodies are better designed to house a dragon's Furnace upon their Coronation. Dragon-Born make great contacts, but they themselves usually yearn for Hearts of their own. A dragon-born that devours a Heart rolls a number of dice equal to his dots in this Merit. If successful, he begins his life as one of the Oroboroi with one extra dot of an Ablution.

A dragon that spawns a child with a mortal produces a 4-dot dragon-born. That hybrid can then mate with mortals to create a 3-dot generation, who would subsequently produce a 2-dot generation. 2-dot dragon-born are too far from the potency of dragon genetics to produce children with this special advantage; all their children are mortal. If hybrids of two different ratings breed, the resulting child has a rating equal to one less than the highest-ranking parent. Two hybrids of the same rating produce a child with that rating.

Being dragon-born is not all excellence and promise. A dragon-born shares her ancestors' vulnerability to jade, suffering the same aggravated damage when wounded by jade-touched weaponry. In addition, her connection to draconic anatomy actually makes her more susceptible to Edicts; her resistance traits are reduced by two when she is the target of a proclamation.

Having this Merit does not prevent the subject from having other template-specific Merits, like wolf-blooded. This Merit is lost when the owner becomes supernatural, though the Skill and specialty bonuses remain.

Bond of Brood (●●●●●)

Prerequisite: Non-dragon character.

Effect: Dragons fall in love with mortals. Not just carnal love, sometimes it is genuine infallible friendship. But the length of a dragon's lifespan is a heavy burden. Sometimes, she likes to share that burden.

The Bond of Brood is a ritual in which the dragon makes a willing participant like family. She removes a portion of her Heart and gives it to the participant for consumption. In return, the participant will cough up a piece of his own heart after eating the segment of hers. She swallows this piece, and the ritual is complete. The participant must be mortal to take part in this ritual.

The Bond Of Brooded mortal ages at half the natural rate for the rest of her life, but also has his life-force intertwined with that of their bonding Oroboros. If the Heart changes hands or is destroyed, the Bonded loses one dot of Health each month until he expires, apparently from cancer.

A Bond Of Blooded mortal gains the right to learn Ablutions. He pays for these with his own experience, paying double the cost of the Ablution. Since a bonded has no method, all but the common Ablutions cost the highest rate. The mortal can only learn Ablutions that the dragon also possesses. If the mortal would become a Dragon himself, the Ablutions he learned while bonded become his own, and he is freed from the drawbacks of this Merit.

A Bond of Brood mortal has no inner Furnace; that is a trait exclusive to dragons. As such, his Furnace Bandwidth is always 1. He can activate or disband only 1 Ablution point per turn. He also receives no protection from supernatural influence and he is not entitled to Degrees of Divinity.

In addition, bonded do not have Assets. Their Breath limit is instead tied to their Stamina or Resolve attribute (whichever is higher) and is only refreshed by contact with the Oroboros that performed the ritual. The two must actually touch to refresh him, and the Breath is actually DEPLETED from the Oroboros, at a rate of one point per turn of contact until he is completely replenished. She cannot resist this, even if the transfer is unwilling, as the ritual has marked him as partial owner of the Heart.

The bonded and the dragon cannot use the same Ablutions at the same time. In effect, he is borrowing the Ablutions from her. The mechanics of this are explained in Chapter Three on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.** If multiple mortals have bonded to the same Heart, they must learn how to cooperate as they also block each other's access to the same Ablutions.

This gift does not come without a price for the dragon. She loses the capacity to reach Furnace 10 until her heart is whole again, and each subsequent "Bond of Brood" means another level of Furnace that can never be reached. From the ritual forward, she also shares degeneration roles with the mortal; whenever he sins against Morality she faces sinning against her Honor. Willpower lost (Not spent, but lost) by the participant is also lost by the dragon, but the reverse is not true. The Dragon's Heart only has nine chambers, so she may only perform the ritual a

maximum of eight times (a foolish effort, leaving her maximum Furnace at two dots).

There are two direct benefits to the Oroboros, however. The friend with which the dragon has made this bond may act as her proxy when refilling sources of Breath (excluding himself if he is acting as a maiden), and when making Edict proclamations. Using Edicts through a bonded friend reduces their effect rating by two.

Pilot Light (●●●●●)

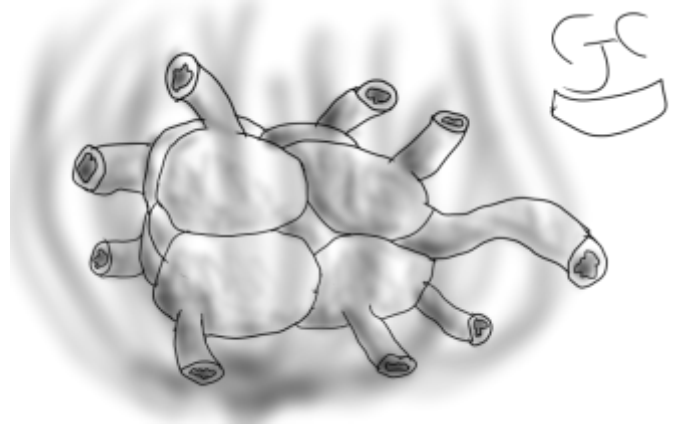
Character Creation Only

Prerequisite: Non-dragon Character

Effect: Children born of a two-dragon union have a small piece of dragon in their chest. Not an entire Heart, but one ninth. Pilot Light works exactly the same as Bond of Brood with five exceptions: with Pilot Light child and parent do not share degeneration, the child cannot act as proxy for the parent, the child pays double the method rate for Ablutions in his parents' methods (instead of the out-of-method rate), the child can use Ablution points at the same time as the parent (They aren't borrowed), and the child may refresh his Breath once a day through successful meditation (as explained in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook on page 51). This does not mean the child possesses a True Form, though... no, that benefit is exclusive to the Oroboroi. He also does not benefit from Degrees of Divinity.

Having this Merit does not prevent the subject from having other template-specific Merits, like wolf-blooded. This Merit is lost when the owner becomes supernatural. While the character possesses this merit, he is as vulnerable to jade as a regular Oroboroi.

...There's a nasty rumor floating around that the hearts of nine Pilot Light children can be cobbled together to forge a new Oroboros Heart. Though the validity of this rumor is questionable, that doesn't stop desperate characters from ruthlessly murdering Pilot Lights.



Language: Draconic (● to ●●●)

Prerequisite: Occult ●●

Effect: The Oroboroi has studied the ancient written language of dragons. This merit proffers different levels of literacy at different ratings.

1: Pictographic (Current - Mesopotamian)

The Oroboroi can communicate messages of middling complexity through the use of draconic symbols. The symbols available are complex enough to project full messages, but not with any kind of efficiency. This language evolved from the one crafted by the Oroboroi after the first collapse.

2: Engraved (Post Collapse - Mesopotamian)

Older than the pictographic language, these carved symbols were used to portray the most basic of emotional stimulus. "Safe", "Danger", "Einherjar", "Leech", and so forth in that manner. They are like hobo symbols. The Engraved draconic was the language developed by the Oroboroi immediately after they overthrew the original dragons. While it is rumored some of them could understand (but not write) the original draconic, those that possessed this talent were felled by the wave of usurpers in the Collapse, so the original language was lost.

3: Written (Dominion)

Before they were destroyed, the original dragons had a sophisticated array of alphanumeric characters that could portray the subtlest of emotional messages. It was said that simply touching these messages would feed an idea directly into the dragon's mind. The Oroboroi, distant as they were from their predecessors, could not crack these codes, though. It was only recently that some learned to read them at all, and they were not able to draw in the moving awe the words were originally fabled to

possess. Still, they can read it, and sometimes they can write it. It makes a great secret code, though, for only one with a Dragon's Heart can ever

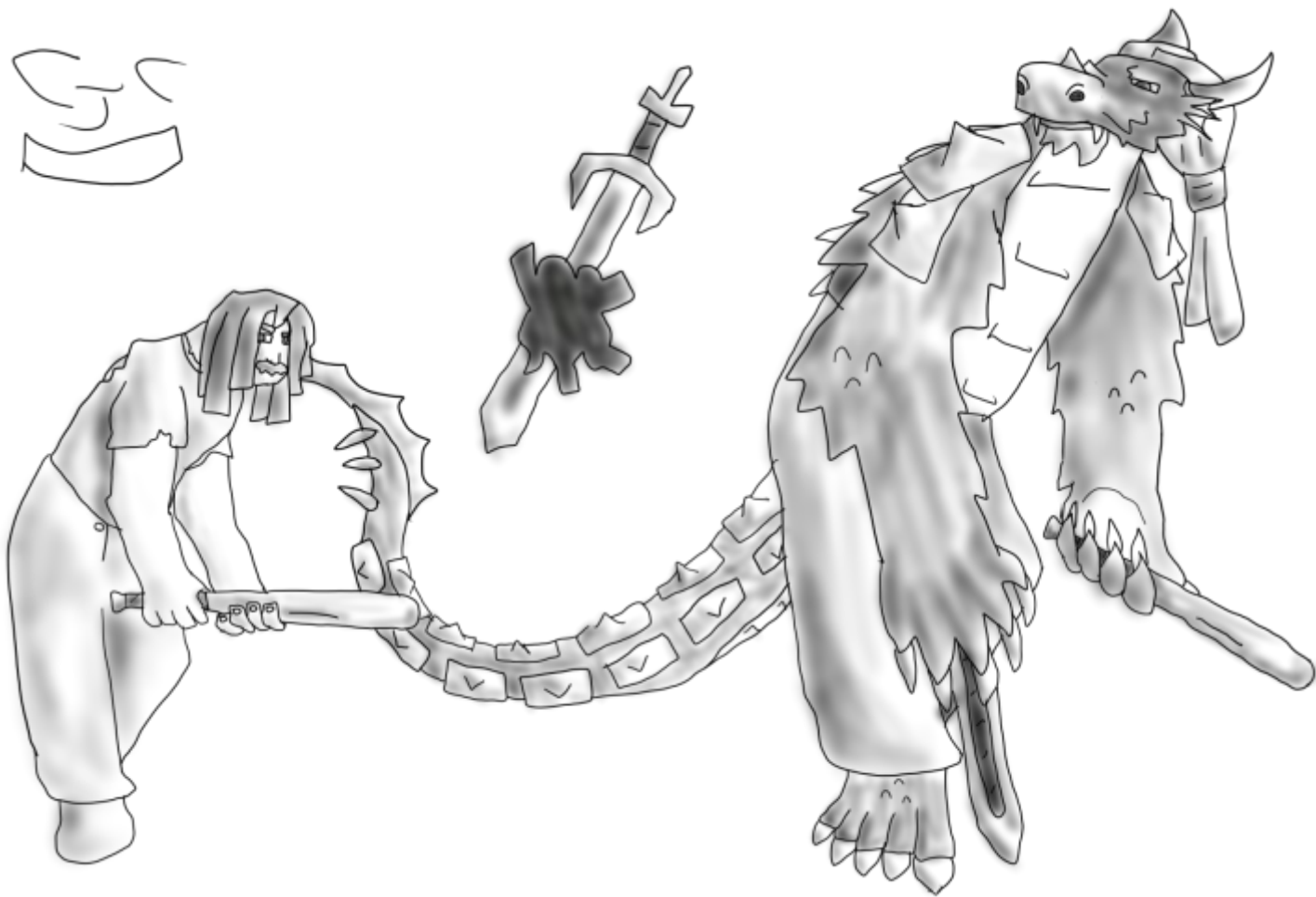
decipher it. In addition, any Edict proclamation made in the ancient draconic receives a boost of two to the Effect Rating.

Slayer: The Rabid Monster, Those who Claim through Violence

The least tactful of the Oroboroi, Slayers were the first method as they replaced the original dragons in the Collapse. A Slayer learns about a dragon's capabilities, and then finds one to take its place. The combat serves as a test of mettle for the soon-to-be Oroboros Slayer, and those that slay their target take the greatest prize.

Slayers are not to be mistaken for Challengers. Killing the dragon is their highest priority; honor or even playing fair are not part of the equation. This isn't to say that Slayers are devoid of honor; it's more a matter of honor as it's useful. All Slayers do share a common trait, though. They want to feel the dragon's life leave in their hands.

Ablutions of the Slayer method are focused on gaining the advantage in combat. A Slayer has the easiest time closing distance on an enemy and pummeling them into powder. Slayers control the battlefield, since it is their greatest joy to inflict pain on others. A Slayer never laxes her practice of combat, and when dealing with matters of Province her first solution is violence. It's often a good solution.



Slayers also have the unique ability to taste danger. If a Slayer spends a point of Willpower this scene and forgoes other benefits, she may tap into this preternatural sense. She experiences nearby physical danger as bitter flavor, more and more severe the more peril looms. On a successful perception roll, the Slayer may request a danger rating from the Storyteller from 0 to 5, with 0 being safe and 5 being imminent peril. The Storyteller is required to answer. A 6 indicates an unknown Oroboros is near; this is the primary means through which a Slayer identifies other Oroboroi.

Slayers begin play with an extra dot in one of the Physical Attributes, and the limit on that Attribute is one higher than that of their other Attributes.

Delver: The Inquisitive Monster, Those who Claim through Curiosity

The Second method to appear after the Collapse, Delvers followed rumors of the Slayers and salvaged the Hearts lost by violence or the flow of time. A Delver hears whispers of dragons and fervently researches everything she can about them. Even with modern resources, it isn't an easy journey. But eventually the path leads to a Heart, and that is what the Delver was *really* looking for, even if she didn't know it.

Delvers know the most about, well, everything. Regarding Oroboroi anatomy, history, politics, and religion there is no other more versed in the subject than a Delver. Many have a weak countenance, but more than make up for it with the vast amount of information that they can muster or easily find. Delvers are driven by a desire to unearth *everything*, and with centuries at their disposal they very well could.

Ablutions of the Delver method are focused on building and locating information. If there's research that needs to be done, the Delver's the one to call. If there's something (or *someone*) that needs to be brought out into the open, the Delver's the one to ask. If a mysterious object needs to be identified, the Delver's the one to seek. A Delver runs her Province with the power of information, setting up an efficient and effective system that protects her and ensures things go her way. Knowledge is power.

Delvers also have the unique ability to smell treasure. If a Delver spends a point of Willpower this scene and forgoes other benefits, she may tap into this preternatural sense. The prospect of nearby hidden objects causes a sweet odor to pique her interest, more potent the more is hidden in the vicinity. On a successful perception roll, the Delver may request a hidden object rating from the Storyteller from 0 to 5, with 0 being no objects and 5 being a secret hoard. The Storyteller is required to answer. A 6 indicates the presence of an unknown Oroboros Furnace (but can't find a Heart); this is the primary means through which Delvers identify other Oroboroi.

Delvers begin play with an extra dot in one of the Mental Attributes, and the limit on that Attribute is one higher than that of their other Attributes.

Challenger: The Devoted Monster, Those who Claim through Skill

Delvers brought a degree of approachability back to dragon-kind, and the first to take advantage of that became the Challengers. Beset by arrogance, dragons were willing to gamble their Heart on the life of an opponent when challenged to a test of skill, just for the amusement of crushing the poor bastard when he lost. Well, some of them didn't, and the dragon became bound to keep the promise. Regardless of how Challengers become aware of the Oroboroi, they all feel the great burden of power and longevity has addled a dragon's modesty. Old leaders don't grow with the times, and need to be replaced. If the Challenger can humble the incumbent, maybe she's better for the job.

Challengers pick a subject and focus to perfection. There's one skill or feature they hold above all other, and to the best of their effort they try to be the best. Most actually are. They are bound by the rules of honor, ingrained by the honor shown them when they first won their own Heart. This doesn't mean they are incapable of betrayal; it just means they betray their newest oath first.

Ablutions of the Challenger method are focused on being socially just, good to their word, and focused to the extent of perfection. If a mob is gathering to stop a corrupt official, a Challenger will be leading the charge. In one on one competitions, the Challenger will no doubt win. A Challenger runs her Province by pure charisma and talent. There is power to be had in numbers, and she has no problem acquiring them.

Challengers also have the unique ability to see talent. If a Challenger spends a point of Willpower this scene and forgoes other benefits, she may tap into this preternatural sense. By gazing at the heat that another living being she can gauge how said being measures up against her own talent. On a successful perception roll, the Challenger may request a talent rating from the Storyteller from 0 to 5, with 2 representing even footing (both being and Oroboros have equal dice pools). The Storyteller is required to answer. A 6 indicates the presence of an unknown Oroboros; this is the primary means through which Challengers identify other Oroboroi.

Challengers begin play with an extra dot in one of the Resistance Attributes, and the limit on that Attribute is one higher than that of their other Attributes.

Grifter: The Noxious Monster, Those who Claim through Deceit

With Challengers came a measure of honor and respectability. But life is built from balance, and an equal degree of treachery met the skillful in combat. Dragons as a whole had become easy to spot, easy to approach, and easy to trick. Those aware of this and with the cunning and malice to take what they wanted became the Grifters, striking with poison, trickery, bribery, theft, and pretty much any other shifty activity possible to claim what they wanted: a piece of the Oroboroi.

Grifters are often even more charming than Challengers are, and they are experts on the approach, the misdirection, and finally the kill. Their attacks are slow to act but lethal in both government and mortality, and they never leave a trail.

Ablutions of the Grifter method reflect the contamination their Furnace suffers due to the means by which they joined dragon-kind. Corrosive, toxic, and inconspicuous: these words sum up the powers a Grifter's divinity grants her. If something needs to be done discretely, contact a Grifter. Grifters run their Province by the same means they obtained their Heart. Little protest has ground when those who complain simply vanish.

Grifters also have the unique ability to hear emotion. This is more than simple empathy. If a Grifter spends a point of Willpower this scene and forgoes other benefits, she may tap into this preternatural sense. By listening to the timbre of a being's voice and the beat of their heart, a Grifter can discern just how emotional the being is and plan accordingly. On a successful perception roll, the Grifter may request an emotion rating from the Storyteller from 0 to 5, with 0 being deadpan and 5 being frenzied. The Storyteller is required to answer and supply the emotion the being is currently experiencing. A 6 indicates the presence of an unknown Oroboros; this is the primary means through which Grifters identify other Oroboroi.

Grifters begin play with an extra dot in one of the Finesse Attributes, and the limit on that Attribute is one higher than that of their other Attributes.

Inheritor: The Entitled Monster, Those who Claim by Favor

The final method came to life when dragons reconnected with their humanity, realizing their hubris or tiring of their existence. This was the cost of stealing the power in the first place, humanity doesn't have the temperance to watch everything it loves wither and die. The escape clause: hand the power off to somebody else.

Unlike other dragons, Inheritors do not risk much to join the Oroboroi. As such, they come in all creeds and classes, a veritable melting pot of traits. The Furnace of an Inheritor is flavored by this initial favor, however. Each of them receives an aura of entitlement that unites them as a method.

Inheritor Ablutions are all about the regality that comes with entitlement, including the direction of others, corporate ladder-climbing, and filling a room with her presence. If there's a gala, an Inheritor is no doubt hosting. Or maybe she's the life of the party. Either way, she's someone you'll notice. Inheritors run their province in a style befitting a monarch. Usually not the best means, but considering history it is a time-tested one.

Inheritors also have the unique ability to feel social connections. If an Inheritor spends a point of Willpower this scene and forgoes other benefits, she may tap into this preternatural sense. By making contact with a being, she experiences a sharp shiver that tells her how closely the being is affiliated with her. On a successful perception roll, the Inheritor may request a nepotism rating from the Storyteller from 0 to 5, with 0 representing no relation (being has no relation to her contacts) and 5 representing an extreme connection (being is directly affiliated with her closest friends). The Storyteller is required to answer. A 6 indicates the being is a member of the Oroboroi; this is the primary means through which Inheritors identify other Oroboroi.

Inheritors begin play with an extra dot in one of the Social Attributes, and the limit on that Attribute is one higher than that of their other Attributes.

Schools of Philosophy

After the spark, Zhu Long—dragon of the south—looked upon the universe and came to understand its principles; an inescapable set of laws to which all matter was forced to obey. These laws were beacons of warmth, remnants of the spark that sought to create, balance, and destroy. Beyond their scope was nothing more than a swirling abyss of nothing. Seeing fractal beauty in this pattern, Zhu Long looked to the creatures that spawned from the spark. They too seemed to follow the pattern—those with rules thrived and those without collapsed into oblivion. Zhu Long decided that the greatest gift he could share was the knowledge of this universal truth, which he witnessed as he watched the spark. The Emperors are his heirs and share his aspiration—the supply and enforcement of law.

After the spark, Quing Long—dragon of the east—looked upon the universe and was enraptured by the flash; he watched as the brilliant light permeated every object and organism, imbuing it with magnificence. Fascinated, Quing Long began to correlate the brightest lights with the greatest potential; it was the light that made life so special. Quing Long was particularly intrigued by the trees, whose sole purpose appeared to be the spread of life, light, and beauty. He saw promise in this beauty... the promise of a universe at peace, following the example of trees in bloom. Quing Long decided that the greatest gift he could share was this perspective, which he gained after witnessing the spark. The Paragons are his heirs and share his wisdom—the need to lead by example.

After the spark, Xuan Long—dragon of the north—looked upon the universe and saw beauty in its chaos; he was astounded that even the tiniest variation in circumstance could have widespread consequence. Like the waters of a stream grinding great boulders into dust, Xuan Long saw chaos as a force that could topple even the greatest of beings. To control chaos... to shape and direct it to one's own whim... to accept it as the inescapable champion of reality... he recognized such was the ultimate expression of enlightenment. Xuan Long decided that the greatest gift he could share was the knowledge of this universal truth, which he witnessed as he watched the spark. The Savants are his heirs and share his aspiration—the breeding and acceptance of chaos.

After the spark, Bai Long—dragon of the west—looked upon the universe and was blinded by the flash; he was left groping in the dark and in despair over the loss. Deprived of the sense he used his snout to detect his surroundings, experiencing the universe through odor like no other dragon could. Bai Long was offended by the smell of gold, it reeked of entitlement and sloth. Conversely he was drawn to the smelting odor of iron. It was the scent of the common man. It was the scent of determination. Bai Long saw hope in these beings... the hope that he might someday witness the universe through his eyes and not his nose. For only the blind truly know what the blind need most. Bai Long decided that the greatest gift he could share was this perspective, which he gained after witnessing the spark. The Viziers are his heirs and share his wisdom—the need to relate to the common man.

Huang Long—dragon of the center—looked upon the darkness and despaired at its emptiness. All that was and all that ever would be was herself and her four brothers. The others seemed content with the arrangement, but Huang Long sorrowed at the circumstance. She longed to nurture, but the extent of reality's potential had already been spent on her and her dragon kin. The only hope of creating anything else waited in the destruction of one of her siblings. But Huang Long was honorable: she could not bring herself to harm any of them. Instead, she made the supreme sacrifice. Praying to the light within her Heart, she erupted in a cataclysm of creation: the spark, and from her formed the entirety of the universe. The earth, the stars, the trees, the rocks, mankind—all are a piece of the center dragon Huang Long. Caitiffs in particular are inheritors of her spirit; despite her absence they receive the message of Huang Long, the call to their supreme duty. It is the duty of each Caitiff to sacrifice herself for the sake of the universe. But knowing that this death is inevitable, and that it must come of their own volition, is enough to drive a Caitiff to despair. It is no wonder they flee their destiny.

Philosophy of the Emperor:

Let there be Law

There is no greater justice than the divine wrath of my claws. You dare cross me? Come and see your reward.

Without laws, everything is chaos—the very brink of abyssal oblivion. In chaos, there is no control. In what cannot be controlled waits destruction. This is the core belief of the Emperors. Emperors strive to embody and disseminate these sacred principles. To be the law one must first understand it, thus one must put aside personal interest for the greater benefit. This confidence fills them with both prudence and vengeance. Justice and order **MUST** be preserved, even if such involves extreme measures or violence. Injustice will not be tolerated; those who disagree will face the wrath of an Emperor and her army.

Mannerisms: Emperors reflect their philosophy in their everyday routine and composure, being strict and stubborn to the point of implacability. This behavior marks them as cold and cruel; though an Emperor is not incapable of emotion she is very calculated in social exchanges, carefully suppressing her mental state to maintain authoritative control. She does not let sentiments get the better of her and her decisions are rarely rash; an Emperor knows that an appropriately tuned poker face is essential to negotiation. This is a useful skill as a member of the Oroboroi, her self-discipline has taught her when using Ablutions would be frivolous and she knows to deal with mortal witnesses sooner rather than later.

The strict expectations an Emperor holds do not only apply to her subjects but to herself as well. She requires excellence in all matters, anything less leaves cracks in her walls through which chaos might slip. After all, it was the laziness of the earliest Oroboroi that led to their downfall. Emperors fear the unknown and thus learn quickly to observe before acting. The danger of counterattack must always be assessed. Their constant vigilance leaves them rarely surprised, but an unreliable network can be their downfall.

Assets: Emperors favor hoards as their primary means of replenishing Breath: sufficient wealth can bribe even the most principled of dignitaries and can hire an impressive force of mercenary might. Weapons are a popular choice, as they can always be plucked from the collection in a pinch. As for an Emperor's province, it in many ways resembles a police state. Security and safety are more important

than personal freedoms; the boundaries of the province are heavily monitored by an Emperor (or her trusted subordinates) and those entering and residing are subject to her forceful regime. Emperors are of the opinion they know what's best for everyone, and being dragons they have the power to impose that opinion on others. Emperor provinces favor traditional geographic boundaries, such as city blocks.

Den Formation: Being obsessed with protocol makes for unpleasant friendships; other Oroboroi are often annoyed with the seemingly unnecessary precautions that an Emperor enlists. Still, they run a tight ship and that security can be comforting, especially against the paranoia of Heart loss. An Oroboroi may be driven to den with an Emperor after she suffers a serious military setback, such as loss of territorial claim or even injury from a mundane source like a mugging. An Emperor can supply the structure necessary to reduce crime in a province and has the dedication to assist in the vicious pursuit of a wrongdoer.

Character Creation: To enforce the law, one must know when it is being broken. Dragons with Wits, Resolve, and Composure are drawn to this philosophy because their natural talents groom them for positions of law enforcement. To ensure these talents go to best use, Emperors practice Politics, Intimidation, and Investigation, along with a little Empathy so they can fill both roles during an interrogation.

New Oroboroi that are drawn to the Philosophy of the Emperor are looking for new structure in a world they no longer understand; the Philosophy gives the new dragon the opportunity to redefine the laws of her reality.

Emperors begin play with one dot in the Wood Philosophy, in honor of their founder.

Concepts: Charismatic General, Ruthless police-officer, Authoritarian Professor, Local Judge, Hospital Administrator

Stereotypes

Paragons: You preach justice, but you flaunt around like a diva. Stop gathering an audience and actually do something.

Savants: Can't you see that everything you do brings us all closer to oblivion? Could you really be so stupid?

Viziers: I just can't trust you. The system may not be perfect, but that's no reason to pull the rug out from beneath us.

Caitiffs: Be worthy of your Heart, or I'll take it from you.

ooo

Einherjar: Thank god they start to rot quickly; it makes them easier to dismember.

Deep Ones: They follow a strict law of honor. I can respect that. But I'D never make a bargain with one.

Shayatin: Filthy corpse eaters... too bad we can't sick them on the Einherjar.

Mortals: Man is plagued by a wayward sickness, he believes that the law exists to serve him. It is our job to teach him the error of his ways.

Philosophy of the Paragon:

Leaders by Example

The light of life is a privilege, not a right. Your actions beg me to revoke your claim. Is that what you want?

Leadership is an attitude. It is about values and priorities measured in actions, not empty words or hollow statements. To be a Paragon is to embrace this attitude. For her, leadership comes across as a state of being, a way to approach life. Paragons act where others wouldn't even consider speaking up, placing themselves in the eye of the storm and thus displacing the fear and hesitation of those around them. It is enacting these actions that mark them as leaders, they do not look for followers; followers find them. It is through the uniqueness of their own dreams that Paragons become a fountain of hope and inspiration for others, pushing themselves to the limit to prove that only through courage can one face disaster.

Mannerisms: Paragons are well-known as passionate and warm-hearted people, with the word "over" serving as a prefix for nearly every adjective that describes them. They also tend to be caring and tender, choosing to believe in others more than they should. Living life to its fullest, they embrace every experience like it's their last. Fearing that the time they have in front of them is not enough (quite an irony for an Oroboros), Paragons become anxious and obsessed with time itself. This can drive them quickly to frustration and projective outbursts, usually towards the wrong people at the wrong time. As hot-headed as a Paragon can be, she just as frequently empathizes with the people in her province, grasping hold of the situation at hand quickly and acting even faster, running the danger of recklessness all too often and quite frequently drawing unwanted attention in their effort to save time. This underlines them as risky, but in endangering themselves they find themselves on the receiving end of the trust of their social circles.

For a Paragon, testing herself is part of her everyday life; that is the way confidence is built and transmitted. Confidence is hope and—conversely—the gravest sin anyone can commit is cowardice. It was cowardice that led the original dragons to collapse—had they possessed the courage to fight the usurper gods and stand in the limelight they never would have been dethroned. Paragons know there is difference between commanding and leading; those that fail to comprehend this are pitied, ignored, or even removed by force. Altruism and

charity are nobilities forgotten in today's world, and Paragons know that the clock is ticking for the few remaining embers, so they give it all they can in hope of humanity repaying the debt. After all, most Paragons find comfort in themselves, for without inner strength they would not have gotten as far as they did.

Assets: Paragons spend a lot of time among people, motivating them and nurturing enduring ideals in their hearts and minds. As such, it is most often the case that a Paragon replenishes her Breath out of the sheer respect bred by the constituents of her Province. Paragon provinces are most often loosely organized, possessing a warm and friendly atmosphere of regulars. This does not imply a lack of security; quite the opposite actually. Viewing the Paragon as a role model, the regulars have come to step up their efforts to be the best they can be. If not, well... Paragons are quick to confront anyone who does not abide by their personal example. Geographically a Paragon's preferences lie in suburban or even rural areas, where communities are close and people have an easier time trusting.

Den Formation: A Paragon's passion and energy bears a strong impact and frequently divides fellow Oroboroi; it is a polarizing personality that results in love or hate but never indifference. In a Den, however, even hate comes to the aid of the Paragon during a crisis: knowing that she will be the first to lay her life in the line for the den and the last to back down from a threat, as that is the example she wishes to set... love it or hate it, it is comforting to have such a dedicated den-mate. Reliability is the synonym for Paragons in Oroboroi circles, and such bears enough gravity to grant them first say in all den matters. After all, true leadership comes in the form of service.

Character Creation: Oroboroi that join the Philosophy of the Paragon exhibit traits key to successfully spending a lifetime in the spotlight. As such, they are often quite formidable in Stamina, Resolve, and Presence. To best control their Provinces they train in Expression, Persuasion, and Athletics, though Politics is often a welcome addition.

Concepts: Modern-day hero, Rich philanthropist, Charitable priest, Loving

kindergarten teacher, Karaoke Star, Pro-Bono Lawyer, Home Town Alderman

Stereotypes

Imperators: If you'd put down the sword and pick up a pen once in a while you'd know that there's more to life than the pointless enforcement of rules.

Savants: Quit putting ideas in the heads of my followers.

Viziers: Hmm? Am I supposed to notice you? I thought your whole deal was to be part of the crowd, why should I pay you any mind?

Caitiffs: I'm fine that you're running away from your destiny and all, but could you be a

little less romantic about it? You're distracting my people with your vagabond nonsense.

○○○

Einherjar: Infiltrate the crowd all you like. Your stench of death will single you out, and then we will destroy you.

Deep Ones: Hmmm... you can give me what for my liver?

Shayatin: That memory of me stress-puking at the front of a congregation? Why don't you go chew on that. Kay, thanks.

Mortals: Do not blame the livestock for straying from the pasture. It is the job of the shepherd to ensure they stay in line.

Philosophy of the Savant:
Sowers of Anarchy

Text

Text

Mannerisms: Text

Text

Assets: Text

Text

Den Formation: Text

Character Creation: Text

Concepts: Text

Stereotypes

Imperators: Text

Paragons: Text

Viziers: Text

Caitiffs: Text

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Einherjar: Text

Deep Ones: Text

Shayatin: Text

Mortals: Text

Philosophy of the Vizier:
Brothers at Arms

Text

Text

Mannerisms: Text

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Assets: Text

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Den Formation: Text

Character Creation: Text

Concepts: Text

Stereotypes

Imperators: Text

Paragons: Text

Viziers: Text

Caitiffs: Text

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Einherjar: Text

Deep Ones: Text

Shayatin: Text

Mortals: Text

Philosophy of the Caitiff:
Martyred by Destiny

Text

Text

Mannerisms: Text

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Assets: Text

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Den Formation: Text

Character Creation: Text

Concepts: Text

Stereotypes

Imperators: Text

Paragons: Text

Viziers: Text

Caitiffs: Text

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Einherjar: Text

Deep Ones: Text

Shayatin: Text

Mortals: Text

Assets

An Oroboros spends Breath by thinking about someone or something that she cares about. If she cares deeply enough, the bond they share fuels the Furnace. To garner Breath, however, the Oroboros must show that her attachment is genuine: she must refresh her Asset.

To refresh an Asset, an Oroboros must spend a reasonable amount of time interacting with the Asset in a meaningful way. This varies not only between the various types of Assets but between the Assets themselves. While having a cup of coffee with Joe (A maiden) might be enough, the very same Oroboros might need hours of private serenading from Veronica (Another maiden).

A character begins play with nine dots of Assets (or up to thirteen depending on starting choices) plus her Furnace, which itself counts as an Asset. After, Assets are completely independent of experience (excluding the Furnace, for reasons explained below). The way an Asset grows, shrinks, is acquired, or is lost depends entirely on how the dragon tends to the Asset.

Hoard

A hoard is a purely physical asset: the Oroboros draws nourishment from the economic and sentimental value of the objects. For a hoard, the dots of asset refer to the net size/net worth of the objects.

Hoard is relatively easy to grow: the Oroboros need simply collect more pieces that fit the theme of the hoard. Unfortunately this also means that hoards are easy to shrink: a robbery can easily deprive a collection of key pieces.

Example hoards: Musical Instruments (3 dots), Bottle Caps (1 dot), Medieval Weaponry (5 dots). The Musical Instruments might be on display in a single room of the Oroboros' residence, and while possibly considered eccentric the collection is not unreasonable. The bottle caps might be confined to a single container, such as a jar or box, and could be reasonably explained away as a hobby. The Medieval Weaponry hoard, however, is so tremendous and rare that it collects in piles all around the Oroboros' residence, similar to the mythical hoards of gold that might be depicted in draconic imagery. Hoards of sizes larger than five become even more ridiculous, and by 10 dots they rival oceans.

Medieval Weaponry



Musical Instruments



Musical Instruments



To draw Breath from a Hoard, the Oroboros need simply think of her treasures and spend a point. In the above example, the Oroboros has drawn Breath once from her Medieval Weaponry, twice

from her Musical Instruments, and once from her Bottle Caps.

Musical Instruments



To refresh a hoard, the Oroboros need simply spend some time enjoying her possessions. Perhaps she plays the instruments, or practices combat with her weaponry, or even just runs her fingers through the caps she collected. Refreshing a hoard clears any marks of Breath the Oroboros may have made against it.

Maiden

A maiden is a purely social asset: the Oroboros draws nourishment from the subject's talent and also from the act of 'caging' the subject, be it by hindering advancement in her career or legitimately towering her away from society. For a maiden, the dots of asset refer to the extent of the Oroboros' attachment to the maiden and consequently the degree to which the maiden is isolated.

Maidens can be the most rewarding asset a dragon acquires, but also the most difficult to maintain. To grow the relationship with the Maiden the Oroboros needs to cut off his opportunities so that he grows increasingly isolated, until eventually he is completely dependent on her. If a Maiden learns of this manipulation too soon it can blow up in the Oroboros' face. They are also favored targets of the dragon's enemies: she had best keep her relationships with her Maidens secret lest they be taken away from her.

Example maidens: Jessica [That singer at the parlor] (3 dots), Jim [Who serves me Coffee] (1 dot), Francis [My towered princess] (5 dots). Jessica could have the potential to make a measurable

career out of her talents, but the Oroboros that claims her as a maiden purposely polices talent scouts AWAY from her so that she will stay with the parlor. Jim is a friendly, but possibly only politely so, acquaintance that the Oroboros insists on interacting with every time they meet, though there is no active sabotage of his career. Francis, on the other hand, has become so dear to the Oroboros that she has been removed from society--or 'towered'--her only interactions are with the Oroboros, other maidens that have been towered, and possibly other Oroboroi in the den (the last is quite unlikely). At even higher dots the towering becomes more and more extreme, and by 10 dots the only living being the maiden is allowed to see and interact with is the Oroboros handler.

Francis [My towered princess]



Jessica [That singer at the parlor]



Jim [Who serves me Coffee]



The Oroboros comforts herself with the thought of her Maiden, drawing a point of Breath in the process. In the above example, the Oroboros has completely depleted the comfort she can draw from the Maiden Francis.

Francis [My towered princess]



Choosing which Asset to draw Breath from can certainly be a gamble. Since refreshing an Asset erases all the marks in that Asset (and ONLY that Asset), it might seem best to simply fill the highest ratings first and then refresh them like an unchallenged font of power. But Assets are not immutable: there can be instances where an Asset becomes unavailable. People get sick. People move away. To refresh a Maiden the Oroboros must spend at least one scene with him, interacting in a way that the Oroboros finds comforting. If the Maiden is out of reach, the dragon will need to find other ways to recover her Breath.

Province

A Province is the compromise, being partly social and partly physical: the Oroboros draws nourishment from the betterment of a society or sub-culture. This often involves staking claim to the sub-culture, either openly or at least mentally, and then working to improve its stature in the world. Province Asset dot ratings are a combination of size and prosperity.

Example Provinces: The Coffee Shop (3 dots), Theater in the Park (1 dot), The City on the Bay (5 dots). 3 dots in a province represents significant emotional investment in the property; the Oroboros is determined to see it succeed. In the case of the coffee shop, the Oroboros likely makes it her business to ensure sales are always high and customers are always satisfied with their purchase and experience. 1 dot represents a passing fancy in the topic. For the theater in the park, perhaps holding a season ticket and soaking in the atmosphere of the scene is enough. 5 dots represents an extreme dedication to the region; for the city of San Francisco the Oroboros likely works diligently to ensure emergency service is never interrupted, tourism is flourishing, and the soul of the community is kept healthy and expanding. Provinces of higher dots increase in geographic scope, and at 10 dots can represent entire continents. It might seem like Provinces are the hardest Breath asset to replenish, but considering their size individual refresher visits can be quite brief (stopping in for a cup of coffee and a chat would be enough to replenish the Coffee Shop asset).

The City on the Bay



The Coffee Shop



Theater in the Park



The Oroboros thinks on the future of her Province, drawing a point of Breath from her aspirations. In the above example, the Oroboros has taken two points of her hope for the Coffee Shop.

The Coffee Shop



Choosing which Asset to draw Breath from is a way in which you as the player can subtly hint to the Storyteller which aspects of the story you wish to explore further. Since refreshing an Asset involves

a scene of dedication, repeatedly drawing from a particular Asset or particular set of Assets tells the Storyteller that you want something to happen on that front of your character's interests. In the above example, the player is trying to indicate that they want more scenes in the Coffee Shop, so they have drawn each point of Breath exclusively from that Asset. To refresh a Province the Oroboros must spend at least one scene within the bounds of the province, either its physical presence or in the company of its regulars. While there, it is to the benefit of the Oroboros to pursue the advancement of the Province. While not required to refresh the Breath, improving the Province can lead to an increase in the dots the Asset has available.

Ideology

For some dragons the physicality of other Assets simply does not appeal. These dragons turn to ideologies—the pursuit of personal perfection—to draw their Breath. While motivation seems like an easy path to power, keeping the promises the dragon made to her soul can prove trickier than advertised.

Example Ideologies: Never Resort to Violence (3 dots), Grow a Garden (1 dot), Be kind to Animals (5 dots). 3 dots in an ideology is a firm tenet of behavior; the Oroboros who decides she must “Never Resort to Violence” will find herself in sticky situations. It is okay to slip once in a while, but only when slightly breaking the Ideology would prevent a worse break in the Ideology (for example, committing violence to prevent more violence). A 1 dot Ideology by contrast is much less strict. She can afford to forget about the garden for weeks, and even if she fails to grow a single weed as long as she keeps trying it will be enough. 5 dots in an ideology is a lifestyle dedication; the Oroboros who decides she must “Be kind to Animals” may have to drop the chase against a dangerous opponent to tend to the wildlife he injured, or may have to gently escort vermin she despises out of a burning building.

Be Kind to Animals



Never Resort to Violence



Grow a Garden



The Oroboros takes pride in the Ideology she has enforced upon herself, drawing Breath in the

process. In the above example, the Oroboros has taken a healthy amount of Breath from each of the Ideologies.

Never Resort to Violence



Within a scene, if the Storyteller believes that the Oroboros has adequately lived up to the expectations of her Ideology, it is refreshed with a full supply of Breath. The Ideology must come into play in some form for this to happen: in a situation where Violence would never be a consideration (at least for someone who isn't a murder hobo), it is illogical for the “Never Resort to Violence” Ideology to refresh. Ideologies can be the hardest of all Assets to manage, from both a player and Storyteller perspective. As such, acquiring an Ideology Asset should be discussed and planned in detail with the Storyteller; if it is too hammy and exploitable it shouldn't be part of the game.

Heart

Regardless of other Assets, every dragon has one source of Breath she can rely on. That source is the Heart itself.

Furnace



The Oroboros may spend the points beneath her Furnace as Breath, like she would for any other Asset

Furnace



Refreshing the Breath in the Heart is also quite simple: the Oroboros need simply hold the Heart in her hands and enjoy the sound of its beat. In fact, True Hearts replenish the Breath in their Heart every scene. For those that remove the Heart, well... it needs to be placed somewhere safe enough to never be found but accessible enough to be visited on a regular basis.

Livestock and the Culling

Sometimes an Oroboros is separated from her Assets, unable to refresh them. Or perhaps she is feeling the pinch in a dangerous situation and doesn't have time to drop everything and go enjoy her Hoards and Provinces. In such an instance, she may turn to a gruesome alternative: the culling of livestock or even human beings.

When an Oroboros devours an animal in its entirety, she may refresh a single point of Breath for each point of size the animal possessed. This Breath may be refreshed to any of her Assets, including her Heart. The animal must be alive when she begins to eat it.

Alternatively, she may pursue the even more deplorable act of devouring human flesh. If an Oroboros eats a human being, she refreshes ALL her Breath, in all of her Assets. The human must be

alive when she begins to eat, and she must consume all the organs within his chest cavity (heart, lungs, liver, stomach, gallbladder, pancreas, spleen, and kidneys). Cannibalism is a violation of the Mandate; the Oroboros risks degeneration by refreshing her Breath in this manner.

[GMC] Cannibalism is also one of the Oroboros breaking points, as will be explained with Mandate below.

Mandate, The Code of the Oroboroi

Unlike the humans they used to be, an Oroboros' sense of principles is almost inverted. Young dragons are often quite surprised at how little grief a human death presents them, and likewise become startled when what would normally be considered a petty offense shakes them so thoroughly. Though this would cause many to question their own beliefs, they are no longer judged by the same scales as humanity. Mandate is the scale by which a leader is measured; making the same mistakes over and over just will not fly anymore.

Without a compass of good leadership, an Oroboros might become nothing more than a monster. The Heart tries to maintain the dignity of the original dragons through the lens of the Mandate. If it finds her wanting, it will abandon her. Death follows.

When a dragon breaks the laws of the Mandate, her player must roll the dice specified for her current Mandate to check for moral degeneration. Should the roll succeed, the dragon finds shame in her actions, or likely feels a wound to her honor. But if the roll fails she slips closer to tyranny and closer to being abandoned by her Heart, losing a dot of Mandate in the process.

The laws of the Mandate are simple: the Oroboros must not betray her principles. There are four such betrayals: Betrayal of Self-Image, Betrayal of Oath, Betrayal of Province, and Betrayal of the Hoard.

Mandate	Dice Rolled
10	(Roll five dice.)
9	(Roll five dice.)
8	(Roll four dice.)
7	(Roll four dice.)
6	(Roll three dice.)
5	(Roll three dice.)
4	(Roll three dice.)
3	(Roll two dice.)
2	(Roll two dice.)
1	(Roll two dice.)

As a dragon slips away from grace, she begins to lose interest in her own life. Things that brought her joy or pride cease to matter, and she becomes more and more corrosive to the world around her in a vain effort to regain the euphoria of glory. This apathy often leads to madness, and for each time Mandate falls the dragon must roll her new score and succeed or acquire a derangement. For more information on Derangements, see the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 96.

Roll Results

Degeneration rolls are made with the dice pool associated with the dragon's current Mandate.

Dramatic Failure: Impossible. There are no penalties applied to either pool, so a chance roll cannot be made.

Failure: On a degeneration roll, your dragon slips away from grace, losing a dot of Ethics as her

standards blur. On an Ethics roll, your dragon's actions have won her a derangement.

Success: Recognizing her actions are abrasive to her purpose, your dragon manages to maintain her sense of what is just and vindictive, and is no less stable for the mistake.

Exceptional Success: The infarction has shown your dragon the error of her ways. Determined to stay righteous, she instantly gains a single point of Breath.

Betrayals

As stated earlier, there are four betrayals a dragon can commit against her Mandate.

- **Betrayal of Self-Image** – A dragon betrays her self-image when she does something unfitting of a leader and champion of the people, such as fleeing from a fight. She also betrays her image by partaking in activities she finds reprehensible,

such as torture or fraud. Repeatedly letting down an Ideology can also be a form of betrayal to her image. Finally, cannibalism is also a form of betrayal to her self-image; by eating the flesh of a human being she subconsciously tells herself that humans—and subsequently half of her identity—are nothing more than livestock of another breed.

- **Betrayal of Oath** – A dragon betrays her sense of honor when she fails to keep her promises. Such promises could include holding up her end of the bargain (especially stressful for Challengers), attending a social event (or at least cordially explaining why such attendance is impossible), or even the implied bond of protection an Oroboros makes with a Maiden when she claims him. Failing these promises—even through no fault of the Oroboros—is grounds for a loss of Mandate. A sufficiently competent leader should have emergency contingencies to ensure she keeps her word.
- **Betrayal of the Province** – When an Oroboros takes a region under her wing, an implied covenant of benevolence is formed. By claiming a Province the Oroboros vows to help it prosper. Scandal harms the Province, especially when the Oroboros' connection is made. Word of her nocturnal activities—carefully edited or not—reaching the public would mar the image of the community, and subsequently harm the dragon's Mandate. Likewise, taking actions that intentionally harm her own people is a betrayal of the Province.
- **Betrayal of the Hoard** – To allow her possessions to be abused or taken is a sign of weakness, unfitting of a leader. Letting a piece of her hoard be stolen risks loss of Mandate unless the Oroboros tracks down the thief and takes back her property. Likewise, allowing someone to destroy part of her hoard immediately triggers a betrayal, and likewise risks loss of Mandate. Oddly enough, the life of a single human being is fleeting in the eyes of progress, yet the loss of one treasured trinket can make her reassess her entire existence.

State of the Union

At any given point in the eternity (or rather, perceived eternity) that is Oroboroi life, a dragon fluctuates between mythical monarch and terrible tyrant. Besides inhibiting (or not inhibiting)

depravity, the state of a dragon's Mandate determines the vibe she gives off to those around her.

Mandate 10

Likely recognized as a leader both benevolent and fair, the Mandate 10 dragon is an admirable beacon of what a person can strive for. Those that know her well would never wish to cross her, and those that cross her face appropriate consequence (though she is not cruel). Beloved is a good description for this dragon.

Dragons of Mandate 10 receive an additional two forging points when they take a reforging action.

Mandate 9

Maybe construed as the boss, maybe not, the Mandate 9 dragon has an excellent grasp on what's right and wrong, and what traits define an honorable figurehead. She does her best for the good of others, eschewing personal gain for provincial prosperity. Though not perfect, it's difficult to find something to dislike about this dragon.

Dragons of Mandate 9 receive an additional forging point when they take a reforging action.

Mandate 8

A touch better than average, but not so lofty as to breed loyalty by presence, the Mandate 8 dragon may not be recognized as the leader of her province. Though she doesn't command respect like dragons of higher Mandate, the Mandate 8 dragon is no less principled, and she doesn't suffer fools. Her province is likely a place of comfort and joy; a reflection of her loving care. People recognize this dragon is a good person.

Dragons of Mandate 8 receive an additional forging point when they take a reforging action.

Mandate 7

Quite similar to the Mandate 8 dragon, the Mandate 7 dragon knows what it means to be decent and just to her province and its residents. Still, there's a sliver of doubt in her step, and the objective observer can see it. It's as if she's afraid to accept her responsibility.

Mandate 6

The Mandate 6 dragon is not wicked. No, she fights to protect the things that she cares about. At this

level a touch of cynicism begins to bloom within her chest. Those that harm her loved ones will be harmed in return. Dragons that attack her will perish. At this stage she will not use murder as a permanent solution.

Mandate 5

Though not necessarily evil, the Mandate 5 dragon is not above underhanded actions for the sake of progress. If something poses a threat to her province, she removes it cleanly and quietly. It's still about the province and not the self, so she will not stoop to such levels for personal gain. Still, those that meet her feel a darkness beneath her voice that is difficult to explain.

Mandate 4

For the Mandate 4 dragon, the lines of 'easiest' and 'best' begin to blur and convenience takes the place of good judgment. The dragon may remove obstacles from her province simply because they don't suit her preferences. She comes off as a little selfish, but the province is still better off for her presence.

Mandate 3

The province becomes a tool for the dragon's own desires when she reaches Mandate 3. She may take destructive measures against her own province for some fleeting benefit, or maim the morale of her subjects in the name of inflating her own position.

Whereas a singular threat would prompt pruning by a higher Mandate dragon, one at this level does not flinch at purging all involved (Even if that purge involves murder).

At this point, the dragon is likely recognized once more as an authority figure. Loathing, if not outright hatred, is the common perception of the Mandate 3 dragon.

Mandate 2

Petty to a maniacal degree, the Ethics 2 dragon is willing to remove dozens of people from the 'privilege' of life simply because they do not meet her preferences. A grudge-bearer by nature, her revenge is often violent. The Mandate 2 dragon sends out an unsettling vibe, and seems to lack any lingering flicker of light. A dictator, definitely.

Mandate 1

There is little distance left to the bottom. The Mandate 1 dragon likely fuels her Furnace by killing and consuming at random. She doesn't care who catches her with Ablutions blazing, as she murders without remorse. The only flicker of conscience remaining is just that, a flicker that vainly hopes to regain her honor. Those in the vicinity of the Mandate 1 dragon feel the chill of death dance down their spine. Extended contact is not recommended.

Mandate 0

When a dragon reaches Mandate 0, she has failed to uphold the principles of a leader and the Heart rejects her. She loses the ability to refresh Breath by any means, loses all dots of her Furnace, and begins to suffer fossilization at a rate of one dot each day, just as if she had lost her Heart through another means. However, her former Heart will not take her back—it knows she is not worthier. She will become a statue within a week at most if she does not change her ways and acquire another Heart, one that does not know her crimes.

The Journey Up and Down Principles

For an Oroboros, losing Mandate is almost identical to losing Morality (as detailed in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook page 91). Drifting below 7 may lead to derangements, which are removed in the reverse order as Mandate recovers. Also, to increase their Mandate rating, dragons must reaffirm their dedication to its principles and spend the experience to raise it. However, the betrayals are not like the sins of other systems: each betrayal remains relevant no matter what level of Mandate the Oroboros exhibits.

[GMC] This is an intentional adjustment to make the system compatible with the God Machine Chronicles update: each betrayal works as a permanent breaking point (permanent in the sense it remains in play after triggering its effect), just as sins would be breaking points against Integrity.

A Dragon's Death

Just like mortals, when a dragon is riddled with lethal wounds she will begin to bleed to death. But for the Oroboroi—well, most of them anyway—death does not hold the permanence it does for humanity. If her physical form is destroyed, her soul is shunted into Jormungandr's Treasury while her Heart begins construction and repair on a new body.

Curiously enough, though, is the matter of the corpse a dead dragon leaves behind. When a dragon dies, her body fossilizes into a frightening but harmless statue, bearing the appearance of the form she currently occupied. If the Heart was still in chest, it remains safely interred within the stone until it is reclaimed. Most people write these statues off as 'fringe' art left in ironic places, but for those in the know... smashy smashy.

Resurrection

When a member of the Oroboroi suffers that last aggravated wound, she dies. Her consciousness is instantly shifted up to a higher state of perception, into the thick of the Treasury. In addition, all Ablutions are disbanded from her perspective and the wounds she has suffered become resistant to supernatural treatment.

Her body continues to heal at the normal rate, but she cannot return to it until at least three of her wounds have healed. She may still use Breath to repair her body, but without the Furnace burning it is much less effective. It takes 7 points of Breath reduce an aggravated wound to a lethal one, 5 points of Breath reduce a lethal wound to a bashing one, and 3 points of Breath removes a bashing wound. These values work for the dragon's resistant wounds, but only in her last three Health boxes. On the plus side, these repairs can be paid for in installments, instead of all at once like while the dragon is alive.

To return to her body, the dragon must brave the Treasury in search of Sparks, refractions of light and energy that she will use to reactivate her nervous system. She needs nine such sparks to do so, and if she cannot collect them she will expire. The rest of her den might be able to assist her in this endeavor by diving into the treasury to find her, but leaving their own belongings behind to do so is quite dangerous. Since this aspect of resurrection involves gameplay within the treasury, it will be explained fully in the First Appendix (beginning on page XX, actually).

For now, know that coming back from death involves more than clearing away the fatal wounds. The Daylight world does not stand still while a dragon is deceased. People move on. Insurance policies cash out. Estates are resolved. There are plenty of complications of death to keep a dragon from willingly ending her own body, and there's lots of incentive to rise again quickly. That's not even

taking into account the hazards she will face in pursuit of resurrection, provided she makes it back to her body.

Came Back Wrong

When an Oroboroi dies, so do the neurons in her brain. While they may be repaired when the dragon resurrects, the Furnace might not do the best job in the world. When a dragon resurrects, a roll is made against acquiring a derangement (using Mandate, just as if the dragon had suffered degeneration, but skipping the degeneration roll). If this roll fails, the Oroboroi acquires a PERMANENT derangement (log it to the side of the Mandate table). This symbolizes an unsuccessful repair of the brain.

[GMC] Use conditions that are triggered by Integrity loss in lieu of derangements, or stick to the special derangements below.

In addition to the derangements in the standard World of Darkness manual, Oroboroi may acquire the following special derangements upon resurrection:

Antecedent on the Shoulder (Mild)

The character has acquired a little hitchhiker; one of the previous owners of her Heart. He's anchored to her body and constantly derides, criticizes, or generally comments on everything she does. And the most frustrating part? Nobody else can see him.

This derangement can be taken multiple times, each time representing a different Antecedent.

Two Souls, One Body (Severe)

The Antecedent has sunk himself into the character's very being, and he's not going to let go. In stressful situations he might even take control of some of her limbs or force-manifest Ablutions. Needless to say it's a disaster waiting to happen.

Twilight Bound (Mild)

The character begins to see entities in twilight states simultaneously with entities in material states. These beings shimmer to clearly differentiate them from the Daylight, but they are incredibly distracting. Thankfully, the only feeling affected is sight. In places with thick ghostly overtones, the character suffers an appropriate penalty to perception rolls.

Precipice of Worlds (Severe)

As the minor derangement, "Twilight Bound", but the shimmering has vanished and now all feelings are affected. The character perceives ghosts constantly, and cannot tell them apart from living people. Of particular danger are the Einherjar, who may hide their perpetual decay under the shroud of ghastly twilight.

Slow to Adapt (Mild)

The character has lost the ability to hop aboard the latest fads and technologies. She always seems to be a few months behind everybody else. While this could be considered simply a social stigma, it is incredibly dangerous for an Oroboros to be unable to ride the wave of the future. Any evidence she's archaic makes her easy to single out by an angry Einherjar.

Time-Locked (Severe)

The character has become completely unable to adapt to the changing world. She will insist on using clothes and technology that was contemporary to the time she acquired this derangement. If she does not cloister herself from the world, she will stick out like a sore thumb.

The dragon may update her time-lock with extended sessions of intense therapy or radical reinvention at the hands of another party, but she must be forced. Also, this simply shifts her year of freeze forward. If she is not helped along repeatedly, she will continue to freeze in the past.

The Antecedent

For those that are stricken with permanent death, they find themselves lost in the expanses of the Treasury, unable to return to their body. Sometimes these dead dragons encounter their Heart's new owner within the Treasury. Because they are those that owned the Heart before, they are called Antecedents. Unlike the Oroboros awaiting

resurrection's renewal, an Antecedent must find ways to fend for himself.

Though not *technically* ghosts, Antecedents gain access to two non-manifesting Numina from the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, pages 210-212. These Numina use Breath in place of Essence. An Antecedent garners Breath by preying on the entities that occupy the Treasury.

Antecedents must pay Breath each day just as an Oroboros would, except an Antecedent is not staving off fossilization but the very dissolution and distortion of his soul by the Treasury. Without these payments he might become something completely different... perhaps even something monstrous and terrible. Worse, the pain of going without Breath could even drive him to crawl into another body, becoming an Einherjar.

Antecedents have a Corpus trait, just as the ghosts of the **World of Darkness** Rulebook (page 170) do. It is thus in name only, though, as the Antecedent maintains his individual Attributes in place of Power, Finesse, and Resistance. He may also continue to utilize his Ablutions, and probably spends most of his time in his True Form.

Antecedents as Backseat Drivers

The real trouble that comes with an Antecedent is when they decide to take a ride with their Heart's current owner. When a dragon's body has finished its reconstruction, the Antecedent can try to tag along. This is reflected by the death derangement "Antecedent on the Shoulder".

For the Antecedents that do grab a ride, the dragon's body becomes their anchor until the Antecedent runs out of Breath, the Antecedent willingly relinquishes the dragon as anchor, or the Antecedent runs out of Corpus (and disperses). He can also be exorcised. In all cases except the loss of Corpus, the Antecedent returns to the Treasury. As the Antecedent is anchored to the Heart he is technically a form of ghost while he's catching a ride. This of course has the potential of making the dragon a walking haunted house, so it's not particularly a good thing. This also makes "Antecedent on the Shoulder" and "Two Souls, One Body" the only death derangements that can be removed by (relatively) normal means.

The Antecedent suffers damage to Corpus each time his anchor (the dragon's body) suffers damage to Health, though the amount inflicted is one step lower. For example, if the dragon were to suffer a lethal wound, the Antecedent would suffer a bashing

one. The risk is worth it, though, to have a readily moving anchor with which to haunt and feast.

Antecedent souls that anchor to the dragon gain access to a specialized Numen that can be activated when the anchor is in the process of manifesting Ablutions. The Antecedent takes advantage of the metamorphosing body's instability and sprouts his own head, gaining contested access to control.

- **Two for One:** When a dragon with Antecedent Passenger has attained the second Degree of Divinity (at least ten points manifest in Ablutions), the Antecedent may activate this Numen to sprout his own head on the body.

This requires the expenditure of one Breath.

A dragon sporting more than one head gets a second instant action within the turn, at the position equal to her Initiative Modifier.

The benefit ends there. That second instant action? It belongs to the Antecedent, and he may act independently of the body. Usually such action can only involve his own head, but for a point of Willpower he can move limbs for the next three turns. This could prove disastrous if he has an agenda that doesn't match that of his anchor.

While forming a head on the dragon's body, the Antecedent cannot use his own Ablutions, but he may make proclamations with Edicts that he knows. The extra head will remain until the Antecedent runs out of Corpus or Breath, or until he decides to retract it. The dragon who is serving as anchor cannot disband her last ten points of Ablutions unless she spends a point of Breath to retract the Antecedent's head (or he decides to comply).

Death of Deaths, The Last Hand

Not every Oroboros death is temporary. Hearts get lost, and find new owners. Eternity doesn't last forever. If that doesn't make any sense, think of it this way: There's always another to take up the mantle.

Should a dragon perish within the Treasury while trying to return to her body, she has died the death of deaths and her potential is dispersed to the winds, finding anchor in the lives of dozens of new beings. Just like the Dragon of the Center, they expire to give rise to new life. Complete fossilization has the same result.

Upon dying this final time, a dragon becomes an Antecedent, as has been described earlier in this chapter.

Eternity and a Day

The Furnace gives a Dragon the regenerative ability to reshape her body, and as such it slows the aging process tremendously. For each decade that goes by, a dragon ages only one year.

It takes a very long time for an Oroboros to reach old age, but she suffers from the trials of age just as any mortal would. However, she may use the heat of her Furnace to reforge her body. For a DOT of Furnace and a DOT of Willpower, an elderly Oroboros may return to the age of her prime. Due to the severe cost involved, this effect is permanent.

Conversely, an Oroboros may choose to burn brighter for a shorter time by shortening her candle. For a DOT of Willpower the dragon may force herself to age 20 years in a 10 year span, receiving a free dot of Furnace in the process. Some dragons choose this alternative if they've selected human mates, with whom they'd like to share a normal death.

The Furnace is not easily stoked, lest it be stoked with the Hearts of other Oroboroi. Neither of these decisions should be taken lightly.

Matters of the Form Corporal

Dragons heal at a preternatural rate, though not through some miracle of metabolism or mystic fate. No, dragons heal at the speed they do because the heat of their Furnace cauterizes the wounds they suffer. Though this process is not mercurial enough to be suspicious, dragons are surprisingly healthy.

- All dragons may spend one point of Breath to remove a bashing wound as a reflexive action. This may even be done while the dragon is unconscious.
- For dragons that can spend two points of Breath in a single turn, a single lethal wound can be removed as a reflexive action. This shifts any bashing wounds to the left one space on the meter. Even if the dragon is unconscious or bleeding to death, she may remove lethal wounds in this manner.

When not using supernatural means, a dragon recovers at the same rate a normal human being does. Bashing damage takes fifteen minutes to heal, lethal damage takes two days, and aggravated damage takes an entire week.

Degree of Divinity boosts a dragon's Size trait, and in addition creates extra wound slots. This

means one thing: a Health meter that expands and contracts.

Should a dragon's expanded health meter contract while wounds are occupying it:



changes to this:



The smaller wounds cluster and become more severe. In this example, one bashing wound ends up in a wound slot that no longer exists, so it combines with the leftmost bashing wound to make a single lethal one. Likewise, if a lethal wound filled a vanishing wound slot, it would combine with the leftmost lethal wound and become an aggravated wound.

Because a dragon's health is so in flux, it may be best to reverse the health meter, placing the three penalty dots on the leftmost end and the highest Health dots on the right. If you decide to portray Health in such a manner, switch the words 'left' and 'right' in this and the following section.

Heroic Health

In addition to temporary Health from changing size, certain draconic traits and powers grant Heroic Health dots: Health levels that absorb wounds and then vanish at the end of the scene, taking the injury with them.

The Heroic Health bar is located below the regular Health meter and has the label "Heroic".

Heroic



While a character has dots in Heroic Health (from various supernatural sources), damage is directed to the Heroic meter instead of the Health meter. The Heroic meter tracks its own roll-over and continues to absorb strikes until it is filled with aggravated wounds...

Heroic



At which point the dots vanish and normal Health rules go back into effect.

Wounds are marked on the Heroic Health track one at a time because of this: the very instant it fills with

aggravated wounds the next wound applies to the Health meter. For instance:

Heroic



In the above situation, suffering four bashing wounds would fill the Heroic Track, ending the effect. The remaining two bashing wounds would then apply to the regular Health Meter:

Health



Bombastic Combat Features

New features of equipment found in certain Ablution Weaponry and Edicts are explained here. They might also be applied to Artifact weaponry.

Deadly Wound

We will discuss Deadly Wound first, as it is a very simple mechanic. Attacks with a Deadly Wound rating grant a number of bonus successes equal to their rating if the attack roll scored three or more successes to begin with. For example, a lethal attack with Deadly Wound 4 that rolled an exceptional 5 successes would actually inflict 9 lethal wounds; 5 from the attack roll itself and 4 for rolling more than three successes with a Deadly Wound weapon.

[GMC] Instead of three successes, only two successes are required to trigger the Deadly Wound effect. The bonus damage is bashing, not lethal.

Piercing Strike

Piercing Strike is a variation of Armor-Piercing ammunition, found in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook on page 167. Piercing Strike only applies to melee equipment, and causes said equipment to ignore a number of points of close armor equal to its rating. For example, a weapon with Piercing Strike 3 is used against an opponent with 1/2 armor and 3/3 bio armor. The attack suffers a -1 penalty from the opponent's total armor (as opposed to the -4 another weapon would face). Alternatively, a Piercing Strike 5 attack is made against an opponent with no armor. The Piercing Strike provides no benefit.

You're probably wondering what makes this different from the Armor-Piercing feature. Well, Piercing Strike is not defeated by the Bulletproof quality. The weapon is just as effective against

bulletproof materials as it would be against anything else.

[GMC] Piercing Strike nullifies an amount of general armor up to its rating.

Knock-back

Knock-back combines the features of Knockdown (**World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 168) with the damage of leaping out of a moving car (**World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 143), which in turn is a version of fall damage (**World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 179). Attacks with the Knock-back property send their victims tumbling a number of yards equal to its Knock-back rating, at a speed in miles per hour equal to ten times that rating. The prior distance is purely theatric, but the later controls how much damage the tumble inflicts.

A victim sent flying by Knock-back 3 would travel 3 yards, but suffer as if he had fallen 9 yards (every 10 miles per hour translates to 3 yards of damage. So 30 miles per hour makes 9 yards), thereby taking three bashing wounds from the Knock-back. Armor reduces damage from Knock-back by one, regardless of its close rating. When the Knock-back distance exceeds six yards (Knock-back rating of 6 or higher), the damage suffered becomes lethal from road burn. Knock-back is not subject to the 10 damage limit that fall damage must follow.

Reliable

Reliable allows a player to re-roll a number of failed dice equal to its rating. You may roll and re-roll single failed dice selectively until you have rolled as many as the feature's rating, or until there are no more failed dice. For example, in a Reliable 2 roll with four failures, two of the failed dice could be tossed and re-thrown for a second chance of success.

In a Reliable 5 roll with two failures, both of the failed dice could be tossed and re-thrown. Let's say one succeeds and the other fails. That failed die could be thrown again (for a total of 3 throw-backs). Let's say that die does not succeed yet again. The player may recycle it up to two more times (for a total of 5 throw-backs, the Reliable feature's rating).

[GMC] Instead of rerolling failed dice, for a number of failed dice up to the Reliable rating (chosen by the player) if said failed die shows a 1, 2, or 3, it counts as a success. Also, for dice selected to be subject to Reliable: 1s explode on 10-Again rolls, 2s explode on 9-Again rolls, and 3s explode on 8-Again rolls.

Sweeping Hit

Sweeping Hit attacks multiple close targets at once, up to its rating. One roll is made, taking into account the highest hostile close armor rating and lowest hostile defense (Armor blocks the attack, but artful evaders dodge it). Successes inflict equal wounds to all targets. The attack is penalized by the number of targets the aggressor wishes to exclude, but it is improved by the disparity between rating and number of targets.

Let's say an attack is made with Sweep 5 against two hostile targets and an ally. There are three targets total compared to the rating of five, so the attack receives +2. *But*, the aggressor does not want to harm her ally, so the attack suffers -1 to exclude him. The highest close armor of all the remaining targets is 3, and the lowest defense is 1, so that comes to -4. The aggressor rolls her dice pool, -3 from all the bonuses and penalties, and inflicts the successes as equal damage to all the remaining targets.

[GMC] The sweep attack still takes into account the highest close armor rating and lowest defense, but armor works differently in GMC. The attack roll is thus only penalized by defense, and has its damage reduced by the highest armor. Each Dodging opponent rolls his dodge individually and adjusts only the damage that he would suffer.

Sticky Grasp

Sticky Grasp is triggered by a grapple attempt. This feature adds its rating as a bonus to establishing the grapple. Within a grapple, the feature adds half its rating (rounded down—even dots for Ablutions) to overpower attempts.

[GMC] Grappling rules are different in GMC, as detailed on page 190 of the **God Machine Chronicles** Rulebook. Instead of overpower rolls, contested rolls are made to determine who makes a move during the initiative slot. Half the Sticky Grasp feature's rating (rounded down) is added to the user's benefit during these contested rolls.

Bed of Thorns

Bed of Thorns is an armor feature that turns attacks back on aggressors. For a character utilizing Bed of Thorns, whenever her defense applies aggressors must choose between a penalty to attack or a set of bashing wounds, equal to half the rating (rounded up—for Ablutions this is the odd points manifest).

If the bearer of Bed of Thorns has taken a dodge action, the full rating is applied instead.

[GMC] Bed of Thorns adds its rating to the Dodge dice pool, and its effect is identical to Armed Defense ●●● (Aggressive Defense).

Health Complications

Two of the following health complications (Trauma and Resistant Injuries) are embellished versions of systems found in other White Wolf products, the prior loosely based on a system found in **Scion** and the latter similarly derivative of a system found in **Mage the Awakening**. This mention is to credit the source of the inspiration, though, as the complications found in the two previously mentioned titles differ from the versions found in this book. While Trauma may be called a “new affliction” in this book, such referral is in reference to the new World of Darkness, and not to White Wolf products in general.

The other two complications (Allergy to Jadeite and Fossilization) are new to this template, but spiritual successors to ideas from other supernatural entities in the new World of Darkness. Jadeite as a secret bane works much like a Werewolf’s vulnerability to Silver or a Vampire’s fear of sunlight, but the very whiff of the stone against a mundane object imbues it with dragon-killing power. Fossilization, on the other hand, inverts the idea of temporary Health, reducing the number of Health dots and consequently the amount of Health available. But more on that momentarily.

Trauma

Trauma is a new affliction found in several Ablutions and even certain Edict equipment, though the Storyteller may attach it to certain weaponry where applicable. Trauma always has a set rating and lasts until the subject suffers no more lethal wounds or until the scene ends (the first is always true, while the second depends on the source of the trauma and Storyteller discretion).

When someone is suffering from trauma, gut-wrenching pain prohibits them from moving quickly or effectively. If they so much as attempt to apply their defense against an incoming attack, sharp stabbing sensations overcome them and their capacity to act is hindered until next turn (thus Defense must be sacrificed to avoid the penalty). Likewise, moving more than a slow walk (half speed) causes the same reaction. For example, a

character suffering Trauma 3 with speed 12 moving more than 6 yards in a turn would suffer a -3 penalty her next action. This penalty is a hold-out, so if a clever player tries to move extra distance and then wait a turn to act, the penalty still applies.

Another interesting thing to note is how trauma stacks. Usually it only sticks as the highest exposure, but if the trauma is from separate sources it becomes cumulative. The highest instance of trauma from an Ablution, an Edict, and a Weapon are all added together to give the total trauma rating. A man suffering from the Reprimand law of Oath, at effect rating 5, struck with Venoms 3 and then a sword that inflicts Trauma 1 would have a total rating of Trauma 9. If that same man was then struck with a different attack of Venoms 2, his trauma would not change (Venoms 2 is less than Venoms 3, and as both are Ablution-origin they do not stack). Below are more examples of how trauma works.

- A subject suffering Trauma 4 does not move, but refuses to sacrifice his Defense. His next rolled action suffers -4.
- A subject suffering Trauma 2 sacrifices his Defense but moves his full speed. His next rolled action suffers -2 to the roll.
- A subject suffering Trauma 1 continually applies his Defense, but takes no other actions. His trauma does not expire, but neither does it pile up. Only the next rolled action suffers -1.
- A subject suffering Trauma 5 recovers from all his lethal damage. He will no longer trigger trauma penalties, and if one was pending it is discarded.
- A subject suffering Trauma 1 from an Ablution is struck with Trauma 3 from another Ablution. The subject now suffers Trauma 3.
- A subject suffering Trauma 1 from an Ablution is struck with Trauma 5 from an Edict. The subject now suffers Trauma 6, as the Edict is considered a different source than the Ablution.
- A subject suffering Trauma 3 moves no further than half his speed and sacrifices his Defense. He suffers no penalty to act.
- A subject suffering Trauma 2 moves no further than half his speed, but utilizes both his Defense and a Defensive Flourish attack. He suffers -2 to his next rolled action.
- A subject suffering Trauma 6 moves no further than half his speed, sacrifices his Defense, but uses a Defensive Flourish attack. He suffers no

penalty, but still benefits from the Defense granted by his attack.

Resistant Injuries

Some wounds inflicted or suffered can only be mended by the material world. Resistant wounds cannot be healed by supernatural means (the exception being the final three wounds on the meter of a deceased Oroboros, and then only by the deceased Oroboros). Also, they take twice as long to heal as a regular wound of the same type would. For bashing wounds, that's thirty minutes. Resistant lethal wounds take four days to heal, and resistant aggravated wounds take an astounding two weeks.

A resistant wound becomes attached to that wound slot at the time of infliction. Marked with a registered trademark symbol beneath the corresponding slot, the resistant status remains until a wound in that slot has healed naturally. This can be especially frustrating if the resistant status occurs near the left side of the health bar, where the wound is likely to upgrade in severity before it has time to heal.



®

In this example, the third wound slot has become resistant. To heal that bashing wound takes thirty minutes. If the subject were to suffer additional lethal wounds:



®

the resistant mark does not move with the bashing wound. In fact, a lethal wound now occupies the resistant slot. It will take four days to heal, and no mysticism will accelerate this process.

It is important to note that though resistant wounds cannot be healed by supernatural means, their mending can be accelerated by natural ones. This includes the Quick Healer Merit, which can be found in the **World of Darkness Rulebook** on page 113.

Allergy to Jadeite

Believed to be a house for the virtues of mankind, true Chinese hard jade (Jadeite) inflicts grievous, unnatural wounds to the Oroboroi. Some believe this is a built-in secret weapon of the original dragons, designed to punish the Oroboroi when they seized power during the Collapse. Others say the faith poured into the precious stone over the

centuries has given it properties of the Treasury, and that shared trait is what makes it so effective against draconic flesh. Whatever the case, it is a long-held secret, and the jade statues are the hint.

Any weapon that has touched hard jade (Jadeite) within 9 seconds (3 turns) of striking an Oroboros inflicts aggravated damage. Weapons that are actually made of Jadeite are even more effective as the wounds they inflict are resistant. Whenever an Oroboros takes damage from Jadeite, she *must* disband a number of points of Ablutions equal to the wounds inflicted (or down to zero if she does not have that many points manifest).

Most would-be dragon-slayers keep a jade trinket to pass over their blades or bullets during the fight. The semantics and history of jade weaponry—as well as how a would-be slayer might go about acquiring such weaponry—are explored in Chapter Four on page **XX**.

Fossilization

The Oroboroi, as usurpers, are cursed by the anchor of their human flesh, which is not potent enough to handle the divinity of dragons. If a dragon does not keep pumping Breath into the Furnace to make up for this shortcoming her flesh will fail and literally turn to stone.

With her first meal of each day, an Oroboros must pay Breath to stave off fossilization, adjusted based on how much divinity she forced upon her human frame. For every five points of Ablutions a dragon manifests her divinity increases by one (this is explained in Chapter Three, on page **XX**). The amount of Breath necessary to protect her is equal to the height of divinity she achieved the previous day.

If the Oroboros does not pay this Breath in its entirety, her flesh turns to stone to settle her debt. For each point she did not pay, erase a Health dot from the left end of the meter.



becomes



[Upper Arm]

List the body part that has fossilized. When attempting to use that part of her body, the Oroboros suffers a -3 penalty to her action. Each time she fossilizes she adds another body part to the list.

To repair the damaged tissue, the Oroboros must rip it from her body and then use her Furnace to

reshape the damaged area. Sometimes she'll have to lose entire limbs and depend on the proclamation of an Edict law to restore her body parts. Mechanically, restoring the fossilized dot involves purchasing a new Health dot with experience (such purchases only restore Health dots that were lost, characters cannot purchase more dots than they owned originally). When a dot is restored in this manner, it comes back with an aggravated wound.



Death does not treat fossilization. When the body is completely repaired, the stone sections remain. This also means that extreme levels of fossilization (those that would reduce the Health meter to less than three dots) prevent the Oroboroi from resurrecting. In such cases, a portion of the fossilized flesh must be chiseled off of the dead (and statuesque) dragon by a friend before she can revive. Each dot restored in this manner results in the permanent loss of one dot in a physical attribute. No attribute may be reduced to zero. If none *can* fall (all physical attributes possess only one dot), then removing the fossilized tissue results in the death of deaths. What's left of her crumbles to dust.

Anatomy of the Heart

The Oroboroi Heart consists of nine chambers, four of which are atria with the remaining five serving as ventricles. The Oroboroi Heart is essentially two independent Hearts drawing from two separate oxygen sources, connected by a center ventricle which pumps oxygenated blood throughout the body.

The Left Heart, or rather the left four chambers of the Oroboroi Heart, gathers low-oxygen blood (in the dorsal left atrium) from the body and sends it to the lungs (from the dorsal left ventricle), where it becomes high-oxygen blood if the lungs are in use. High-oxygen blood is then received in the Left Heart again (in the ventral left atrium), where it is sent to the center ventricle (from the ventral left ventricle). If the dragon is currently not utilizing her lungs, the low oxygen blood is blocked out of the center ventricle by means of a specialized nervous reaction, instead being redirected to the first atrium of the Right Heart (The ventral right atrium).

The Right Heart, or rather the right four chambers of the Oroboroi Heart, gathers low-oxygen blood just as the Left Heart does (in the ventral right atrium), but sends it off to the Furnace instead (from the

ventral right ventricle), where it becomes high-oxygen blood if the dragon is within the Treasury. Returning from the Furnace, high-oxygen blood (in the dorsal right atrium) is then pumped into the center ventricle (from the dorsal right ventricle). If the dragon is currently not within the perception of the Treasury, the low oxygen blood cannot enter the central ventricle due to the same nervous reaction that occurs in the Left Heart.

Finally, the central ventricle stores oxygenated blood and pumps it throughout the body. It only ever contains oxygenated blood, and will only pump if it has blood in it. Because of this, a dragon that has had both her sources of oxygen cut off will not have a pulse, as the low-oxygen blood simply flows back and forth between the Left and Right Hearts. Instead, her chest will whirr quietly (and practically undetectably) until she starts breathing again or she dies.

Of course, that's how it would work if a dragon kept her Heart in chest. All of these functions are performed sympathetically with the Heart's beat, so it needn't actually hold the dragon's blood at all. An astral bond connects the body with its blood muscle, and some say a silver string can be seen connecting the two if you look hard enough. Though, it could be jade, too.

An interesting thing to note is the fact that air in the Treasury is different from air in the Daylight. It is drenched with potential, which floats like metal shavings around the Oroboros and can shred her insides if the Furnace does not filter it properly. As such, the depths an Oroboros may descend into the Treasury depend on how potent the fire at her core burns.

The Heart as a Possession

The Heart is a physical entity, usually kept hidden in safety. Those that would steal it for a meal are not the only threat, though they are the largest. For those with the intent to do so, the Heart can be damaged and destroyed.

An Oroboroi Heart is Size 1, with Durability 0. This means it only has a single point of structure; destroying it is simply a matter of finding it. Due to its relation to the Furnace, it is immune to heat and fire-based damage. It is also immune to accidental destruction: if it is to be damaged it must be done with intent. As such, it is also insufficient to simply collapse a building and hope the Heart is lost in the destruction. To be destroyed, it must be exposed first.

Mortals are inexplicably drawn to consume the Heart as soon as they hold it in their hands. Without spending a point of Willpower to resist they will swallow it, unhinging their jaw and consuming it whole. This triggers a coronation in the consuming mortal.

When an Oroboros loses claim to her own Heart (by loss of Mandate, by destruction, or by consumption by a mortal), she immediately loses the capacity to refresh her Breath Assets. She also begins to suffer the effects of fossilization, losing one dot of Health each day that passes even if she pays her Breath to prevent the usual triggers (If she doesn't, well, the rate of fossilization is accelerated). Without a replacement Heart she will quickly die: she must either reclaim the Heart that was taken from her or find a new one to take its place. Depending on how she lost the Heart, other dragons may not be willing to help her.

Destroying an Oroboros Heart is a sin against Mandate, as it is a Betrayal of Self-Image. No dragon would partake in the act lightly.

Preternatural Detection

Are Oroboroi aware of each other when they aren't utilizing their Ablutions? Usually not. Even to dragon-kind an Oroboros in mortal form is indistinguishable from any other human. That is, without immediate proximity.

When an Oroboros gathers near to another being, she can sense the presence of a Furnace by tapping into her method's preternatural senses. This can lead to an uncomfortable revelation, especially if one Oroboros had intended to manipulate the other. When an Oroboros draws near to a deep one, she detects only a crushing cold where that heat should be.

Staking out Possessions

Sometimes a dragon does not feel her presence is enough to imply ownership, so she sets out to mark her possessions. This must be done in a subtle way, so as to circumvent the laws of humanity.

When a dragon wishes to lay claim to an area or an object, she may brand it with a unique heat signature. By funneling Breath into a symbolic shape called a "sigil", the Oroboroi scours a mark into the surface of an object. From that day forward the marked area becomes a hot-spot, giving off a very subtle wave of heat. It is completely invisible unless infrared radar is utilized, in which case it

displays a very intricate initial and insignia. This process is called "Branding".

Dragons are aware of this branding even if they cannot see in infrared light. When one comes across an unfamiliar hot-spot, he knows he's trespassing. If a dragon so chooses, she may brand her own flesh. Such an act is called "sigil branding", and used as a further means of identifying herself as an Oroboros. It is usually not recommended, though, as such sigil brands are visible through infrared imaging technology.

Grafts

The Graft Merit (page 12 in Chapter 2) gifts a dragon one of these mysterious devices, but what are they, exactly? And what do they do?

Creating a Graft involves the death of a mortal, subjected to the machinations of a terrible ritual. The Graft itself is comprised of the slain mortal's body, compressed tenfold and shaped in gruesome fashion. It is mystically charged by the former life that created it, and by grasping another object it converts that mysticism into something useful.

The Graft bonds with a host, and withdraws into the body to wait. This is the Graft's hiding state. With nothing to mount, it serves no purpose. It must be attached to an object with a mundane function (though the object itself needn't be mundane). The Graft reaches out of the body to clasp a tool, sometimes at the dragon's call and sometimes of its own volition. This is the Graft's binding state.

During a binding state, a Graft improves its mount's bonus by its rating. A knife that normally does 1 (L) mounted with a 3 dot Graft instead does 4 (L). A wrench that normally adds +1 to a Crafts (Repair) roll mounted with the same Graft instead grants +4. While a Graft is attached to an object, that object's Durability is doubled. And for every fifteen minutes that pass while the Graft is attached, the object has one lost point of Structure restored.

There are drawbacks, of course. The Graft is a terrifying, metallic, boney, encircling mass. And it does not let go on its own. One point of Breath, or one lethal wound, is required to force the Graft back into hiding. If it is separated from the object by some other means (such as disarming or the object's destruction), this price must still be paid.

When a Graft is created, it absorbs a strong emotion from the life that created it (the dying individual, and no, the emotion does not have to be despair). If the dragon feels the Graft's emotion to

an immense degree, the mystical bone clasp lunges out and grabs the first mount it can reach.

If a dragon is horrified by her augmenting clasp, or she finds it endangers her secret too much, she may rid herself of her Graft. To do so, she must sacrifice a DOT of Willpower to incinerate it, and it cannot be gripping anything when she does. There is no refund of experience for this destruction.

Growing the Furnace

Growing the Furnace involves more than spending experience to increase the trait. Action must be taken to give the fire room to grow, whether that room take the form of more space to spread out of a brighter burn depends on the choices an Oroboros makes.

Burn through your Flesh: Discarding Youth to Grow Furnace

As stated earlier in this chapter, an Oroboros may grow her Furnace by accelerating the rate at which she ages, advancing twenty years down her lifetime in a ten-year span. Such sacrifice raises her Furnace rating by one, though she still must pay the experience to do so.

Vomit up your Soul: Sacrificing Organs to Grow Furnace

The traditional means through which an Oroboros grows her Furnace is to vomit up a piece of her soul to make space in her body for the growing Furnace. This takes the form of expelling an organ and with it access to one of her emotions. The first such sacrifice was her own heart, which was replaced by the draconic Heart of nine chambers (and often excised for immortality). Such granted her first dot of Furnace.

When an Oroboros sacrifices an organ, she loses the ability to experience its affiliated emotion unless she carries said organ on her person (She need not hold it directly but it must be with her in some form). Without it, she must spend a point of Willpower to convincingly fake the emotion when appropriate.

For the purposes of this game, there are eight key emotions a being can experience with all other emotions being a combination of two or more of these 'core' emotions. Each such emotion is affiliated with one of the organs in the chest cavity of the body.

The Heart carries with it the emotion of **Joy**. All dragons sacrifice their hearts when they join the Oroboroi; those that excise the Heart for immortality must carry it to experience legitimate joy, or pay Willpower to fake it. The Gallbladder is paired with the emotion of **Trust**. The Stomach is paired with

The ritual to create the cursed object (and subsequently create a graft) is a tightly held occult secret. Very few dragons know how to perform this wretched act, and those that do aren't going to share the knowledge. It is, however, rumored to be a technique stolen from the Einherjar, so whatever the ritual may be it is a grave affair.

the emotion **Disgust**. The Liver is affiliated with **Anger**. The Pancreas with **Fear**. The Spleen is affiliated with **Sadness**, the Kidneys with **Anticipation**, and the Lungs with **Surprise**. For these latter seven, the organ in question is expelled and must be carried to experience a genuine emotion (otherwise they must be faked with Willpower). Faked emotions do not trigger Typhoon effects, but neither do they trigger Grafts.

An Oroboros might think herself clever in the sacrifice of negative emotions, but such sacrifice should never be taken lightly. Anger and Fear are key motivational tools, and Surprise is an essential component of danger awareness. In addition, Disgust is a natural response to materials that would pose a biohazard—without it the dragon might unintentionally expose herself to disease because she can't feel the Disgust to warn her of danger.

The organs as possessions follow the same rules as the Heart as a possession in that they can be easily destroyed if found, but intent must be involved. If an Oroboros loses one of her organs, she may steal one from another Oroboros (even if it wasn't hers) and use it to experience emotion as if it were her own. Organs may also be used in bargains with a Deep One, as explained in the first Appendix.

Growing Furnace through organ removal still requires the expenditure of experience.

Doom your Peers: Devouring Hearts to Grow Furnace

Vomiting up the soul is often a terrifying prospect. Aging at twice the normal rate can be even more frightening. What's the harm in just eating somebody else's Heart to stoke the Furnace? This is the reasoning of a devourer.

Throwing a second Oroboros Heart into the mix flares up the Furnace, making it burn at a higher temperature. It also turns the devourer into a hydra—a multi-headed beast. While the Heart itself has no direct effect on the Oroboros' psyche, its previous owner latches on as an antecedent, leaving pieces of his face scattered on the surface of her body. An ear, a nose, an eyeball... horrifying tumorous masses mar her complexion.

Each additional Heart she adds to the mix makes the matter worse, spawning the faces of each of her victims somewhere on her body. What's worse, ascending degrees of divinity give the faces more prominence, and past Divinity 2 they can even form heads like an anchored Antecedent would.

Devouring a Heart is a Betrayal of Self-Image and risks loss of Mandate. It is also a terrible betrayal to the Oroboroi species as it accelerates the

already-threatening extinction. Seeing the signs of a devourer may drive an Oroboros to attack her; since the faces and subsequently heads are harder and harder to conceal it is a rough choice to grow Furnace in this manner.

Growing Furnace by devouring still requires the expenditure of experience; the devouring circumvents the need to sacrifice organs but not the need to grow as an Oroboros. If, per chance, the Oroboros changes her mind about being a devourer, she may try to claw the faces off of her body. Each one she successfully removes will be scoured from her body if she sacrifices the dot of Furnace that she gained for consuming him. The heat loss is a result of the Furnace being used to cauterize the antecedent out of the body. In other words, devouring to gain Furnace and then removing the antecedent does NOT result in a net gain of Furnace.

Combat Errata

The following two subsections are quick fixes to some systems in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, needed to make certain systems in the **Dragon** game functional.

Grappling with Opponents of Irregular Size

Sometimes, especially with disparaging differences from Divinity, dragons may grapple or be grappled by opponents with grave differences in Size. What does such a grapple mean? Well, there's no difficulty in establishing a grapple, regardless of Size. Being able to do anything once a hold has been made is another story.

Picture a man attempting to wrestle an Elephant. He can certainly grab on to the leg of the thing, but if he tries to pull it down to the ground or drag it away it will likely move HIM instead. This system reflects this manner of struggle: when making Overpower roll attempts, the larger of the two in the grapple receives a bonus equal to the difference in their sizes. It's as simple as that.

[GMC] This bonus applies to the contested grapple rolls, since the update does not have Overpower maneuvers.

Aquatic Combat

Swimming is listed as a specific application of the Athletics skill, and holding breath while submerged was listed under the functions of Stamina, but no specifics for aquatic action were ever clarified. In this system, a being is classified as either aquatic or terrestrial (or both) based on which environment she is better suited to move in. It is assumed that all mortals—and all Oroboroi without the appropriate Ablution—are terrestrial.

A terrestrial may tread water safely for a number of turns equal to his Athletics, provided he succeeds in a Stamina + Athletics roll (Failure means he can't keep above water, he must hold his breath or drown). He must then use an instant action to tread again for another Athletics turns or he will sink. In addition, a terrestrial suffers inhibited ability while immersed—swimming converts any move action (like defense or travelling their speed) or instant action (like an attack) to a full action. Speed is likewise penalized as he cannot make use of his Species factor (for most, this means losing that size bonus [or +5] to Speed). In short, the terrestrial must choose between attacking, treading water, or swimming to a new vantage point.

To an aquatic being, the water poses no threat. She may tread indefinitely and move at her swimming speed (Strength + Athletics + Species Factor), all while maintaining her full assortment of actions. An aquatic being may be out of her depth on land unless she is also a terrestrial; but such is outside the scope of this game.

Typhoon

Finally, we close the chapter with Typhoon, the phenomenon of triggering weather with extreme emotion. When an Oroboros experiences a genuine (not faked) emotion, which on a scale from 0 to 5 is at least a 4, her intense state lowers the pressure in the air and can cause a storm to form.

The Storyteller rolls the Furnace of the triggering Oroboros as a dice pool; on success a hazardous environment forms equal to the dragon's Typhoon rating. If said rating is zero, the storm is fleeting, like a summer downpour. If the rating is four, the storm might cause catastrophic damage to everything around it like a hurricane.

The level of Typhoon dictates a penalty to act while in the thick of the triggered storm. In addition, if a subject remains in the storm for a number of hours exceeding her Stamina, she suffers bashing damage equal to the level of Typhoon each subsequent hour until she gets to safety.

[GMC] On success of the Furnace roll, Typhoon triggers one environmental tilt per rank, and creates an extreme environment with danger rating equal to its rank (the penalty as written is a simplified version of extreme environments). A quick list of environmental tilts can be found on page 207 of the **God Machine Chronicles** Rulebook and an explanation of extreme environments can be found on page 213 of that same book.

Chapter Threë: Ablutions and Edicts

Something had gone horribly wrong.

He'd been sliding that trinket across the pipe, and now her legs were a jumbled mess of ripped muscle and shattered bone. What the hell was it? Just some stupid little statue, but it must have been special. And he dumped her into the compactor they use to crush cars.

The walls were moving in. Cameron dug her claws into the metal and pushed, but she could feel her bones snapping. She screamed as her fingers crumpled and shot an array of bloody bone flechettes into her chest. This was the end.

Cameron settled into a blur of red, and then there was darkness.

"Success is not the result of spontaneous combustion. You must first set yourself on fire."

—Fred Shero

Dragons suffer a dichotomy of depiction, either being praised as divine spirits or abhorred as rampaging monsters. Modern versions of the dragon are subjected to both of these images simultaneously. Either depiction is both immensely powerful and more than moderately intelligent, though, be it a treasury of wisdom or a weaving of wretched magicks.

Oddly enough, "Dragon" has become a term for any hodge-podge compilation of biological characteristics thrown together in a chimera—or rather an amalgamated being. Provided it can exhale an elemental substance and is at least partially reptilian, anything can pass as a dragon. To encourage the creativity of this game in particular, the players choose Ablutions to define their own image of "what makes a dragon", and they are even free to put on and take off those traits as they please. The process of Ablution manifestation (known as reforging) is described in this chapter, along with the conditions and benefits of the various stages of Divinity.

As potent as their physical traits may be, the Oroboroi can call to force an equally potent mysticism, enforcing their own rules on the laws of reality. This popwer, known as an Edict proclamation, as well as the powers a dragon can call upon with it, are explained at the end of the Chapter.

Manifesting Ablutions (Reforging)

Unveiling and re-concealing a divine trait makes up much of the dance that is a dragon's eternity. Charging around as a giant lizard all the time is not an option, as the Miasma will not protect such blatant carelessness. Much of Ablution use is the struggle of having access to fantastic powers, but not being able to use them.

But that is irrelevant here. To assume or disband an Ablution without tissue damage is a time-consuming process. The heat of the Furnace is applied to the region that needs reshaping, and then the dragon's will forges it into the form proper.

System: To assume or disband an Ablution, you must take a reforging action. A reforging action takes the place of either your dragon's Defense, or her Instant action. In other words, she could move her Speed, apply her Defense, and assume forging points, *or* she could move her speed, take an Instant action, and assume forging points. You are free to decide which you prefer on a turn-to-turn basis, but if Defense has been used already it cannot be sacrificed to manifest Ablutions.

[Mirrors] Reforging is one of the options for a Move action.

If the dragon so chooses, she may spend a point of Breath to gain the benefit of a reforging action without the sacrifice of her Defense or her Instant action. In effect, the act becomes reflexive for that turn. A dragon may only gather one set of forging points in a turn.

Taking a reforging action supplies the dragon with a number of forging points based on her

Furnace (see Bandwidth on the chart on page **XX** in Chapter Two), which can be spent to assume or disband an Ablution.

Flight *Impervious* *Claws*

Hide



When no Ablutions are manifest, the Oroboroi cannot be differentiated from an ordinary human being. By applying forging points, she can draw out her divine traits and actually benefit from them. If the above dragon had a Furnace rating of 7:

Flight *Impervious* *Claws*

Hide



She could apply her four points of bandwidth to take advantage of her flight and claws. It's important to note that even though she had four forging points to apply, she did not need to use them all. If she did not, however, the overflow would be lost at the end of the turn.

The number of points assumed in an Ablution may never exceed the number of dots owned in that same Ablution. Dots in an Ablution are purchased with experience, whereas points show how manifest an Ablution is. The prior is more permanent than the latter.

Flight *Impervious* *Claws*

Hide



To assume the fifth point of an Ablution (and any point higher, if you're playing a Furnace 6+ game), *two* forging points must be expended. For our Furnace 4 dragon, moving from Impervious Hide 4 to Impervious Hide 5 would take two of her four forging points from the reforging action, leaving her two to spare.

[GMC] This is no longer the case. Manifesting or Disbanding Ablutions at every level requires only one reforging point.

Disbanding an Ablution (for the means of concealing the Oroboroi nature) works exactly the same, but in reverse. A reforging action is taken by the dragon, but the forging points are spent to remove Ablutions. Our Furnace 7 dragon, after ending her foe, takes another reforging action:

Flight *Impervious* *Claws*

Hide



softening a single point of her Impervious Hide and reduce the size of her claws. In this manner, disbanding Ablutions takes as long as manifesting them. It is important to note that disbanding the fifth point or higher in an Ablution requires two forging points, just as assuming it does.

[GMC] Again, this is no longer the case.

If a dragon attempts to exceed the Bandwidth imposed by her Furnace she may do so, but not without consequence. The Bandwidth listed under Furnace is the number of Ablution points she can manifest safely within the course of a single turn.

- If she exceeds the Bandwidth by one, she suffers a single bashing wound and her muscles bruise from too vigorous a change.
- If instead she exceeds the Bandwidth by two, she suffers a single lethal wound as flesh tears in its effort to reshape.
- If instead she exceeds the Bandwidth by three, she suffers a single aggravated wound as bones snap and tendons tear while reforming.

Tells

When a dragon manifests an Ablution, she is physically altering a portion of her own body into a new shape, one that benefits from draconic prowess. It is not unreasonable to assume that such alterations bring with them a noticeable change in appearance.

When a player manifests an Ablution's first point in a scene, the Storyteller informs that player

where the Ablution alters her character's appearance, and then the Player explains HOW her appearance changes. For a single Ablution these altered traits are easy to conceal, but as the dragon manipulates her body further the features become more and more difficult to conceal.

It may be helpful to illustrate the character in full draconic glory so that assigning these telling features is simply a matter of pointing and confirming.

As stated, the Storyteller decides WHERE the body changes and the Player decides HOW the body changes: this grants the storyteller important control over how difficult concealing the current state of the dragon's body is, while the player maintains creative control of her character's appearance.

Degree of Divinity

As a dragon manifests more and more Ablutions, her statutory human features are washed away, replaced with a fitting draconic form. This is partly due to the accumulation of tells, and partly because the act of scouring away the mortal coil causes system-wide changes. The extent of that process is explained here.

For every five points the dragon has manifest (between all her Ablutions), her Degree of Divinity increases by one. This triggers the physical changes described in her new Divinity.

The visible features of these Divinities are a general guide for creating a lizard-style Oroboros akin to the western image. As Storyteller, feel free to have players write out their own descriptions (or perhaps illustrations) of each Divinity if the images in their mind differs from these.

Divinity 0 - Human

The dragon has fewer than five points manifest in her Ablutions. Beyond the tells from any assumed Ablutions, she is indistinguishably human.

This Degree adds: Nothing.

Which brings the total to: Nothing.

Divinity 1 - Elevated

The dragon has between five and nine points manifest in her Ablutions. Her canines become noticeably longer and sharper, her ears flare at the tips, and her brow becomes more pronounced. A bump forms at the base of her back as an extension of her tailbone, poking out roughly an inch. Her skin texture becomes coarse as scales begin to erupt

in various places. She is otherwise indistinguishable from a human being, and these traits are easily concealed.

This Degree adds: Nothing.

Which brings the total to: Nothing.

Divinity 2-Reptile

The dragon has at least ten points manifest in her Ablutions, but no more than fourteen. Her teeth become noticeably longer and sharper, especially the canines, and the shape of her nose's bridge widens and protrudes, forming the beginning of a muzzle. Her skin-tone takes on a damped shade of the color her scales will eventually bear. Her ears flare further into fanned fins. The tailbone bump grows into a tail nub, roughly a foot long.

The dragon also gains a point of size, rivaling the mass of a gorilla.

This Degree adds: +1 (L) damage to bite attacks, +1 Size

Which brings the total to: +1 (L) damage to bite attacks, +1 Size

Divinity 3-Half-Dragon

The dragon has at least fifteen points manifest in her Ablutions, but no more than nineteen. Her teeth are further sharpened. The nose widens and joins with the mouth as the jaw protrudes further, more formally forming the muzzle. The skin attains the target shade, its scales thickened to the point of being visible at a distance. Finally, the tail nub extends into a full appendage, with length roughly half that of the body.

The dragon may drop down on all fours to increase her speed, adding a +2 species factor. She also gains +2 size, rendering her larger than a Grizzly Bear.

This Degree adds: +1 (L) damage to bite attacks, biting without a grapple, +2 species speed factor (all fours), +2 Size

Which brings the total to: +2 (L) grapple-less bite attacks, +1 to scent-based perception, +2 species speed factor (all fours), +3 Size

If the dragon wishes to disband Ablutions this scene, she must pay a point of Willpower first. The power is just too tempting to resist without determination.

Divinity 4-Whelp

The dragon has at least twenty points manifest in her Ablutions, but no more than twenty-four. The

muzzle has erupted into a full bestial maw of sharp teeth, and the dragon's skin is now completely covered in wide scales (which should not be confused with Impervious Hide). The length of the tail grows, rivaling the total height of the dragon.

When on all fours, her species speed factor is now +4. All Motion Ablutions act as if they have one additional point manifest. Finally, she again gains extensive mass: +3 Size makes her larger than a Rhinoceros.

This Degree adds: +2 (L) damage to bite attacks, +1 effective manifestation to "Motion" Ablutions, +2 species speed factor (all fours), +3 Size

Which brings the total to: +4 (L) grapple-less bite attacks, +1 effective manifestation to "Motion" Ablutions, +4 species speed factor (all fours), +6 Size.

If the dragon wishes to disband Ablutions this scene, she must pay a point of Willpower first. The power is just too tempting to resist without determination.

Divinity 5-Wyvern

The dragon has at least twenty-five points manifest in her Ablutions, but fewer than twenty-nine. Her maw now extends roughly seven inches, her body is covered in wide scales, and her posture is menacing. Decorative horns form around her body, many of them contorted. She also grows in stature again, rivaling the size of a Sports Utility Vehicle.

When on all fours, her species speed factor is now +6. She benefits from +4 Size, and any Weaponry Ablutions act as if they have one additional point manifest.

This Degree adds: +3 (L) damage to bite attacks, +1 effective manifestation to "Weaponry" Ablutions, +2 species speed factor (all fours), +4 Size

Which brings the total to: +7 (L) grapple-less bite attacks, +1 effective manifestation to "Weaponry" Ablutions, +1 effective manifestation to "Motion" Ablutions, +6 species speed factor (all fours), +10 Size

This power is so awing that the dragon must spend a point of Willpower each time she intends to use forging points to disband an Ablution.

High Degree of Divinity

When a Dragon attains a Furnace of 6 or higher, she gains access to even higher degrees of divine manifestation.

Divinity 6 - Dragon

The Oroboroi has at least thirty points manifest among her ablutions. At this point she begins to slip the bonds of her human half. Her size increases dramatically (+5), making her larger than a military tank.

This Degree Adds: +3 (L) damage to bite attacks, +5 Size, +1 effective manifestation to “Weaponry” Ablutions, +1 effective manifestation to “Motion” Ablutions

Which Brings the Total To: +10 (L) grapple-less bite attacks, +2 effective manifestation to “Weaponry” Ablutions, +2 effective manifestation to “Motion” Ablutions, +6 species speed factor (all fours), +15 Size

Attempting to Disband an Ablution requires the Oroboros to spend a point of Willpower.

Divinity 7 - Wyrn

The Oroboroi has at least thirty-five points of Ablutions manifest, but no more than thirty-nine. She gains additional size (+6), growing larger than a tourbus.

This Degree Adds: +5 (L) to bite attacks, +6 Size, +2 effective manifestation to “Weaponry” Ablutions, +2 effective manifestation to “Motion” Ablutions

Which Brings the Total To: +15 (L) grapple-less bite attacks, +4 effective manifestation to “Weaponry” Ablutions, +4 effective manifestation to “Motion” Ablutions, +6 species speed factor (all fours), +21 Size

Attempting to Disband an Ablution causes the Oroboros to suffer a loss of two Willpower, and she must spend a point of Breath to do so.

Divinity 8 - God

The Oroboros has at least forty points of Ablutions manifest. Having mastered her Heart, she leaps the boundary that held her apart from the dragons of old, and sheds her status as a usurper. She may no longer disband Ablutions, and is thus permanently in True Form. Her size is tremendous (+7 in this stage).

There are advantages, however. She may now draw nourishment from the worship or fear of others. Rate the fear or worship a mortal experiences from 1 to 3, with 3 being complete reverence or terror. The Oroboros gains that much Breath this scene. The Furnace cap on Ablutions is also lifted, and any may be increased with experience (to a rating up to 28 dots). Finally, she may roll all the Laws of a single Edict together in the single proclamation.

This Degree Adds: +5 (L) damage to bite attacks, +7 Size, +5 effective manifestation to “Weaponry” Ablutions, +5 effective manifestation to “Motion” Ablutions

Which Brings the Total To: +20 (L) grapple-less bite attacks, +9 effective manifestation to “Weaponry” Ablutions, +9 effective manifestation to “Motion” Ablutions, +6 species speed factor (all fours), +28 Size

If the Oroboros would face fossilization, she is instead rendered unconscious in a mystic coma, plunging her into the Treasury.

Borrowing Ablutions

The Bond of Brood Merit allows a mortal who has undergone the described ritual to share a dragon’s Ablutions. That mortal gains access to the reforging action, using his single point of Bandwidth to generate change. He and his patron share the same Ablutions, and thus a portion of the same sheet. If the Bonded manifests an Ablution:

<i>Wings</i>	<i>Impervious</i>	<i>Claws</i>
<i>Hide</i>		
		

he goes from right to left, marking ‘bashing’ slashes on the sheet. For the bonded, this is his first point, and the far left is his last. If the Dragon manifests an Ablution point that the Bonded is using, she covers up his mark with her ‘lethal’ slashes. He is forcibly subjected to disbanding, possibly suffering wounds if she overrides him more than one point at a time. As stated before, Brood-Bonded are not entitled to Degrees of Divinity.

Ablutions

Dragons are definitively biologically separate from mankind. Myth and fiction piece together traits both natural and alien to construct the visage of these creatures, and a rich treasury of illustrations old and new create a dizzying array of meanings for the word 'Dragon'. Ablutions are these traits.

Members of the Oroboroi define for themselves what it means to be a dragon, both spiritually and physically. The combined complement of Ablutions they manifest is both an arsenal at their disposal and a means of self-expression. Wearing them is always a road toward suspicion by the masses, but the might of a draconic body is a hard power to resist.

Members of the Oroboroi can freely learn Ablutions from the common set and the set associated with their Method, but other Ablutions must be taught or at least witnessed several times, and they are always more difficult to incorporate. This is reflected with an increased experience cost.

When making a **Dragon** character, that character gets to choose ten Ablutions. Partly their preconceptions about dragons from fiction, partly a conversion of their personality into physical characteristics, these first Ablutions give the new dragon some defense mechanisms for her new Furnace. Five Ablutions are chosen from the common set, those common to all dragon-kind. Three Ablutions come from the dragon's Method set, which is determined by the means through which their Heart was acquired. Finally, two Ablutions can be chosen from any set, including those not associated with the dragon's Method.

The only way to get new Ablutions is with the expenditure of experience. The dragon finds and practices a trait she likes, eventually incorporating it into her divine form. The experience chart shows the cost of purchasing Ablutions in this manner. (Ablutions must be acquired *sequentially*.)

Having a complex array of Ablutions available means more power at your disposal, but also a larger effort to use them. More points mean more room to increase your dragon's Degree of Divinity, however. Ablutions must be manifest to be used, simply owning them does not grant any benefit.

The Ablutions detailed here are only some of the many once possessed by dragon-kind. It is not at all an all-encompassing list, yet none remember those that are absent. In other words, you're free to make them up as you go. An Ablution creation

guide is provided in the sidebar at the end of this section.

All Ablutions provided here come with an explanation of their function, a description of their physical tells (minor for one to two points manifest, moderate for three to four, and major for five), any associated costs, and any rolls involved. If there is an action or roll associated, the possible outcomes are listed. They are also defined by their complexity, be they compound, sequential, or odd over even.

Common

Traits of divinity, Common Ablutions are the easiest to learn and thus the features most practiced by the Oroboroi. These Ablutions are the least expensive to purchase for all dragons.

Weaponry: Inferno

Though the heat of a dragon's Furnace can be put to many uses and converted to many different forms of energy, sometimes the most effective application of that heat is incineration. The dragon simply belches out a blast of fire, good for igniting flammables and fauna alike. This blast has a short range in yards equal to double the points manifest in Inferno, plus 10 yards.

Being that the Breath is in its most potent form, this attack inflicts horrific wounds. It is the only attack an Oroboros can make that deals aggravated damage. The amount is equal to the points manifest in this Ablution. If the Oroboros spends a point of Breath, the attack gains the benefit of an autofire medium burst, as detailed on page 160 of the **World of Darkness** Rulebook.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath per medium burst

Dice Pool: Stamina + Firearms

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: In the unlikely event of a Dramatic failure, the dragon accidentally swallows the ball of flame she was about to project. She suffers a single point of lethal damage, but recovers the Breath if spent.

Failure: The orb of flame fails to connect with the target.

Success: The orb of flame strikes the target and inflicts a number of aggravated wounds equal to the successes rolled.

Exceptional Success: In addition to the massive damage inflicted, the target catches fire. This fire is considered to be the size of a bonfire with the intensity of a torch, but it inflicts aggravated damage. It is comprised of natural accelerants and thus all attempts to smother the flame are successful. For more information on fire, see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, page 180.

Impervious Hide

In many of the tales of old, it was said that mortal weapons served no purpose against the scales of the dragon. Weapons of all materials were repelled by their mighty armored skin. Reality is not as perfect as myth, but in that tradition this Ablution makes a dragon much more difficult to kill.

For each odd point manifest, the dragon receives a +1/0 rating to her armor. For each even point manifest, the dragon receives a 0/+1 rating to her armor. A number of incoming wounds are decreased in severity equal to the points manifest in Impervious Hide (so when three points are manifest, four aggravated wounds become one aggravated and three lethal).

For a single point of Breath this turn, the dragon instead *ignores* a number of incoming wounds equal to the points manifest, regardless of type.

The armor ratings from this Ablution may be applied on top of any other armor the dragon may be utilizing, as it is both biological and space-efficient.

[GMC] Instead of the additional damage reduction, the Ablution is sequential and gives +1/+1 per point manifest. While manifest, Ballistic armor applies to ALL attacks. The Breath boost remains unchanged.

Type: Odd over Even

Cost: 1 Breath to ignore damage this turn

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

Firearms versus Athletics

In **World of Darkness Armory**, a distinction is made between pulley-projectile weaponry and ballistic weaponry. At Storyteller discretion, any Ablution weaponry that utilizes Firearms may instead be used with Athletics.

Motion: Flight

Often when depicted in western art a dragon sports a pair of leathery wings, used to soar over villages and terrorize the populace below. Not all dragons

have wings, but many of them like to fly. This Ablution allows them to do so.

Having any amount of points active in this Ablution allows the dragon to take to the sky. The speed at which she flies is equal to (Strength + Stamina) x Flight. While in the air she can be difficult to spot: an aggressor beyond close-combat range must succeed at a Perception roll before he may act against her (this is a reflexive action, but has a limit of one per turn). Upon success, he keeps his eye on her and need not spot her again until he looks away (to act against another target) or he is knocked prone.

In addition, the dragon's forward jumping distance becomes static: measured in yards instead of feet, it is always Size + Flight points. Her vertical jumping distance also changes from feet to yards, but must still be rolled (albeit with Flight in the dice pool). In addition, she gains the ability to pounce on her opponents from the air, either by leaping or by dropping onto an enemy from above. The range of this attack is equal to her forward jumping distance. For information on jumping, see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, pages 66 and 67.

For a point of Breath this turn, the dragon's flight can be made so forceful that it knocks others to the ground. Anyone she passes in close combat must roll Stamina + Furnace and succeed or be knocked to the ground, losing their action and being forced prone... also, if holding a weapon they are disarmed. A pounce attack also triggers this effect.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to fly forcefully.

Dice Pool: Strength + Dragon's Size – Target's Size

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The dragon leaps or dives forward to attack, but misses and lands poorly. She suffers a single lethal wound.

Failure: The dragon leaps or dives forward but the attack misses. She lands somewhere adjacent or beyond her target.

Success: The dragon leaps or dives forward and crushes the target with her landing, inflicting a number of bashing wounds equal to the successes rolled, plus the points manifest in Wings. The subject becomes prone.

Exceptional Success: One of the target's limbs is wrenched by the force of the pounce. This inflicts a level of lethal damage and the target may face penalties related to that limb until the wounds have healed.

[GMC] The target suffers either the Arm Wrack or Leg Wrack tilt, as detailed on pages 206 and 211 of the **God Machine Chronicles**.

Chimeric Sense

Not everything has an extensive back-story or mythical justification. Sometimes dragon anatomy is just better than mortal counterparts, and in this case the senses are included.

Points in this Ablution increase Perception rolls on a one-to-one basis. Also, whereas normally an Oroboros needs to spend Willpower to use her method sense, manifesting this Ablution allows her to make use of it for free.

This Ablution also grants the dragon access to the supernatural senses of the other methods. Slayers taste danger. Delvers smell treasure. Challengers see talent through heat. Grifters hear emotion. Inheritors feel social connections. For a single point of Breath this turn, Chimeric Sense gives the Oroboros the benefit of one of these. If she paid for her own sense before she manifested this Ablution, the first such activation is free.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath for out-of-method sense

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

Vile Humours

Some depictions of dragons, particularly the Hellenistic dragons from Greek mythology, are carriers of deadly poison. In particular, the Hydra of Lerna's very blood was so terrible it melted flesh. An Oroboros can tap into this tradition and make her own body a font of acid.

With this Ablution, the dragon's blood and fluids are replaced with an acidic compound, but this does not hinder her. It can prove bothersome to attackers, though. Each time the dragon suffers lethal or aggravated damage, she inflicts 1 lethal wound or one point of structural damage automatically to everything within close combat range (one to three yards). She also corrodes a number of armor points—close or ranged, or some combination of both—equal to the points manifest in this Ablution. This excludes her own biological armor, though not the armor she's wearing or the biological armor of others. Corrosion is not cumulative; it is always at the highest level manifest when blood is drawn. If the armor corroded is supernatural or biological in origin, the reduced utility lasts for the scene only. Otherwise the damage is permanent.

The dragon can also draw out the benefit of her acidic humours by spitting, but may only afflict a single target when doing so.

Reflexively spending one point of Breath, the dragon using Vile Humours may control the acidity of her blood, preventing it from harming her friends. Such protection lasts only for a single spurt, if she would bleed more she must pay again.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to protect allies for the turn.

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

Flight of the King

Where there are world leaders there are assassins. With this Ablution dragons stay on their toes, and can get the drop on a would-be surprise attacker.

Odd points manifest increase the dragon's Initiative by 1, and even points manifest increase her Defense by 1. When taking a dodge action, the dragon may add her points manifest in Flight of the King to her Defense, after the doubling that normally occurs. This works almost identically to the "Brawling Dodge" Merit (**World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 110), except Defense is doubled and *then* increased by Flight of the King (this Ablution may be used in conjunction with the Merit if preferred, in which case Brawl and Flight of the King would both be added to base Defense). For more information on taking a dodge action, see the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 156.

For a single point of Breath, the Oroboros counters the melee attacks launched at her this turn. For every one that an opponent rolls against her, he suffers a lethal wound from her backlash.

[GMC] Flight of the King is added to the dice pool when dodging.

Type: Odd over Even

Cost: 1 Breath to Counterattack

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

Sing oh Muse

Dragons have been the inspiration of art the world over; in dozens of mediums and in hundreds of styles they have appeared virtually everywhere. The Oroboros that takes up this Ablution becomes her own source of inspiration.

For each odd point manifest, the dragon receives a +1 bonus to Crafts, and for each even point manifest she receives a +1 bonus to Expression. Her existence serves as inspiration to those that

think of her. Any mortal who holds the dragon in his mind also receives these bonuses. In addition, he is protected from the supernatural by her inspiration. He has an effective Furnace equal to the points manifest in this Ablution for the purpose of resisting supernatural influence from all parties EXCEPT the dragon who inspired him.

When a Crafts or Expression roll that was not a chance die is resolved, roll a number of additional chance dice equal to the odd points manifest in this Ablution. Add any successes from these dice to your total. These chance dice do not risk dramatic failure.

For one point of Breath this turn, turn any ones you rolled in both the rolls into successes.

Type: Odd over Even

Cost: 1 Breath to invert dramatic failures

Dice Pool: None

Action: None

Why Buy Skills?

Many Ablutions provide a bonus to skills, improving the natural talents an Oroboroi in her proper body possesses. However, if she is not skilled to begin with, even the added expertise is not enough to outweigh the unfamiliarity. For this reason, skill bonuses provided by Ablutions do not nullify the untrained penalty. The dragon must know at least a little about what she's doing in order to take full advantage of her new traits.

The Ablutions, on the other hand, are not throttled by the maximums imposed on a character. With clever use of Ablution and Skill training, a dragon can get up to eight dots in a single Skill at Furnace 5 or less, and even higher when her human limits have been lifted.

Weaponry: Claws

Dragons were not legendary simply for their longevity and fortitude. They were dangerous, and they had a personal arsenal of biological weapons to throw at their enemies. This weapon is the claw, strong enough to punch through armor and rip all comers to shreds.

The claws have the "Piercing Strike" feature with a rating equal to the points manifest in this Ablution. That means attacks made with the claws ignore an amount of the target's close armor rating equal to the points manifest in this Ablution. Claws make no distinction between biological and non-biological armor. Attacks with the Claws are made

with Strength + Brawl, and the damage rating is two lethal. More information on Piercing Strike can be found in Chapter Two on page XX.

For a point of Breath, this turn's attack inflicts Trauma equal to the points manifest in Claws.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to inflict Trauma

Dice Pool: Strength + Brawl

Action: Instant

Weaponry: Horns

Dragons were not legendary simply for their longevity and fortitude. They were dangerous, and they had a personal arsenal of biological weapons to throw at their enemies. This weapon is the charging horn, sharpened to a point and angled for maximum thrust.

Though the dragon may or may not actually have horns, she can ram her enemies with the horns for huge momentum damage, rendering the damage rating equal to the yards she's traveled before striking (maximum bonus equal to her Stamina).

This weapon has the "Knock-Back" feature with a rating equal to the points manifest in this Ablution. That means any strike with the horns flings a victim a number of yards equal to the points manifest in this Ablution, at a speed equal to ten times the points manifest in this Ablution. That usually translates to one bashing wound per yard, but this damage can be reduced by the victim's non-biological close armor rating. Attacks with the Horns are made with Strength + Brawl. More information on Knock-Back can be found in Chapter Two on page XX.

For one point of Breath, the charging Oroboros forces the victim to roll Stamina + Furnace; on a failed roll they are rendered unconscious by the blow.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath for a knockout attempt this turn.

Dice Pool: Strength + Brawl

Action: Instant

Tail

Dragons, as they are usually reptilian, tend to be depicted with tails. In nature, tails serve many functions. Some are clever distractions, discarded to distract a predator while the lizard flees. Other assist in bipedal posture. Some are used to whip about pheromones and various unsavory aromas (though less so in the reptilian morphology). There are tails that are prehensile and are as functional as

an extra limb. And still more are simply decorative. For an Oroboros, all these functions are within her reach.

The dragon may use her tail (or in its absence, an invisible 'arm' of air pressure) as an off-hand and even suspend from it. She may also use it to initiate a grapple or even grapple a second opponent. When used to assist in a single grapple, victims must succeed twice rather than once to break from the grapple. For more information on off-hands, see page 156 of the **World of Darkness** Rulebook. For more information on grapples, see page 157 in that same book. Note that even if she is ambidextrous the tail still counts as an off-hand.

For each odd point manifest she receives a bonus to using the tail as an appendage (to mitigate off-hand penalties). For each even point manifest in this Ablution the Oroboros receives a bonus to Stamina for the purpose of preventing knock-down and knock-back.

For this turn, if the Oroboros spends a point of Breath she may immediately attempt an Overpower maneuver, or if she is not grappling she may initiate a grapple without contest (victim loses roll).

[GMC] As detailed in the book **God Machine Chronicles** on page 199 the winner of a grapple roll may take one move from the list, or two on an exceptional success. The tail allows the Oroboros to take one additional move, for two on a success or three on an exceptional success. This replaces the double-success to escape described in the Ablution.

Type: Odd over Even

Cost: 1 Breath to Swift-Grapple

Dice Pool: Strength + Brawl

Action: Instant

Luminescent Lure

The silent dark of the deep ocean is a hunter's paradise, trapping the weak in a velvet net of black. Terrified and helpless they swim to the light, only to be swallowed by the monster that uses it as bait. Dragons use this Ablution to repeat this process on land.

The dragon possesses a phosphorescent angler's lure (or in its absence, a floating orb of light) and the maneuverability to use it effectively. While the Luminescent Lure is manifest, aggressors who decide to attack her may be distracted by the lure, forced into making targeted attacks, and then only against the lure... at a -3 penalty. They must spend Willpower to do otherwise. In addition, the lure grants a number of Heroic Health dots equal to its

rating. For information on Heroic Health, which is tracked separately from standard and temporary Health, see page **XX** in Chapter Two.

[GMC] When the lure is struck, the Oroboros does not receive a tilt against her for damage, regardless of how severe the injury.

The Luminescent Lure also dispels darkness... at any manifestation it is enough to change pitch darkness (chance die) to substantial darkness (-3 to act). Even points manifest reduce the other penalties caused by darkness.

For a point of Breath this turn, the light of the lure is indistinguishable from sunlight, and also inflicts blindness on any hostile entities that observe it. The blindness is a brief stun from the flash and lasts only for this turn.

[GMC] It does so by inflicted the Blinded tilt in both eyes, as described on page 208 of the **God Machine Chronicles** Rulebook. The tilt ends at the end of the turn.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to blind with sunlight

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

Electric Skin

The electric eel (in name only, as it was originally misidentified as an eel) attacks prey by discharging voltage from its electric organs (voltage generated by the water's current). Dragons that take this Ablution develop similar organs, though they generate voltage from the subtle motion of the atmosphere.

The Oroboros can discharge this voltage buildup once per scene as she pleases, though successive uses require a point of Willpower. The resulting jolt inflicts two bashing wounds per point manifest to everything within close combat range (one to three yards) excluding the dragon herself. Any living being touching the dragon becomes trapped by the resulting muscle contractions from the shock, and must succeed at a Strength roll or continue taking damage (as explained in the "Electrocution" section of the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, on pages 177 and 178). Because of this the voltage continues its output until that being finally breaks free (or falls dead), though that does not prevent the dragon from discharging the voltage again. Being jolted by this Ablution causes victims to lose their next actions.

[GMC] This Ablution inflicts the Stunned tilt, as described on page 212 of the **God Machine Chronicles** book.

This turn, if the Oroboros spends a point of Breath she may launch the electricity as an autofire long burst, as described in the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, page 160. The effects of being subject to the jolt are identical to the close combat version. Willpower is not required for Breath-instigated jolts.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Willpower for subsequent jolts in the Scene, 1 Breath for a long burst jolt

Dice Pool: Stamina + Firearms

Action: Instant

Chameleon Hide

Another tool taken from the box of reptile traits, Chameleon Hide lets a dragon easily blend with her surroundings. Those that fall into the category of prey find this trait indispensable.

For each odd point manifest, the dragon gains a +1 bonus to Stealth. For each even point manifest, she gains a +1 bonus to Larceny. She may roll to hide in plain sight (so long as she is blending), though she may suffer penalties if she makes too much noise while doing so.

It is important to note that the passive form of this Ablution only applies to the dragon's skin, and not her clothes. If she wishes to hide in plain sight, she will need to remove her vestments or spend a point of Breath to draw them into the blend with her (or suffer appropriate penalties to her Stealth rolls). The dragon's eyes are never concealed, and are usually the means of discovery if her sneaking fails.

Type: Odd over Even

Cost: 1 Breath to blend clothes

Dice Pool: Composure + Stealth

Action: Reflexive

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The dragon fails to camouflage correctly, but worse she does not realize she's exposed. She continues to act as if she is unnoticed until outside stimulus alerts her otherwise (usually violently).

Failure: The dragon is perceived as a slight irregularity of the scenery, such as light bending in an irregular manner. Or perhaps she has made a sound that alerts others to her direction. Onlookers are likely to investigate, though they suffer a penalty to spot her equal to the points manifest in this Ablution.

Success: The dragon successfully blends with her surroundings, going unnoticed. If others are searching for her she may need to continue rolling.

Exceptional Success: Identical to success, but the dragon has concealed herself so well her roll next turn automatically succeeds.

Slay

Traits of war, Ablutions categorized under Slay are designed to inflict death. Dragons of the Slayer method get a discount when purchasing these Ablutions.

Weaponry: Wrist Blade

Dragons were not legendary simply for their longevity and fortitude. They were dangerous, and they had a personal arsenal of biological weapons to throw at their enemies. This weapon is the sword, incorporated into the dragon's anatomy.

From the wrist of her main hand the dragon forms a sharp, double-edged blade, which is attached to her by a thick tendon (or lacking that particular tell, a pocket of high pressure air forms matching that description). Any fighting style that uses knives or short-length blades can be applied to this weapon. The blade has an ingrained channel down the center, designed to accelerate blood flow.

This makes it very deadly, and as such it possesses the "Deadly Wound" feature, with a rating equal to the points manifest in this Ablution. Deadly Wound only comes into play when an attack rolls three or more successes. It adds its rating to the successes total, greatly increasing the inflicted wounds. The Wrist Blade may also be used with appropriate Weaponry Merits and fighting styles.

Attacks with the Wrist Blade are made with Strength + Weaponry. Its base damage rating is three lethal. See page **XX** in Chapter Two for more information about the Deadly Wound feature.

For one point of Breath this turn, the Oroboros may double the weapon's Deadly Wound rating.

[GMC] The wrist blade is size 2 and has a -1 initiative modification and a Strength requirement of 1. It uses the Machete weapon profile which can be found on page 205 of the **God Machine Chronicles**. As explained in the previous chapter, Deadly Wound is triggered by two successes in GMC, not three, but the extra damage inflicted is bashing.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to double Deadly Wound rating

Dice Pool: Strength + Weaponry

Action: Instant

Noxious Breath

Jörmungandr was prophesized to slay Thor during the apocalyptic end the Norse called Ragnarök, choking him to death with his terrible poisonous breath. At the moment, Jörmungandr still sleeps coiled on the ocean floor, but any Oroboros may tap into the mythos and make their breath toxic as well... just not as fatally as the legend would suggest.

The dragon can belch out toxic fumes, a knockout gas that deals one point of bashing damage per point manifest in this Ablution. This noxious assault is fired off as a long burst (with all implied bonuses and penalties), with a standard range in yards equal to thrice the points manifest. The first such belch in a scene is free; subsequent belches cost a point of Willpower. The gas generated is charcoal black and has no other symptom of inhalation except a slight sense of vertigo and extreme respiratory distress. For information about long bursts, see page 160 in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook. Obvious in this case there are no bullets to be fired.

The fumes will linger in the air for five turns, provided wind or some other outside force doesn't accelerate its dispersal. Any who remain in range of the fumes will suffer the bashing damage again each turn unless they hold their breath, use equipment to protect from fumes, or get to fresh air. For information on holding breath, see page 49 of the **World of Darkness** Rulebook.

Regardless of continued exposure, all parties except the belching dragon that inhale the gas suffer Trauma equal to the odd points manifest in this Ablution. For more information on Trauma see page **XX** in Chapter Two. Also, if the gas causes a target's final open wound slot to fill that target instantly faints. The gas cannot inflict harm to unconscious targets.

For one Breath on use, the noxious fumes knock out all targets that fail a Composure + Furnace roll to avoid inhaling the gas.

[GMC] This Ablution inflicts the stunned tilt, detailed on page 212 of the **God Machine Chronicles** book. This Ablution also ignores armor.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Willpower for subsequent belches this scene, 1 Breath to belch instant knock-out gas

Dice Pool: Stamina + Resolve

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The dragon chokes on the belch, suffering a single point of bashing damage.

Failure: The fumes inflict no initial damage. They linger for only two turns.

Success: The fumes inflict bashing damage equal to the points manifest in this Ablution. They linger for five turns and those in their smoggy grasp continue to suffer the points manifest as bashing damage.

Exceptional Success: Besides the standard effect, the belch's costs are refunded. It also lingers for seven turns instead of five.

Motion: Fireproof

There are dragons that are depicted as being the residents of volcanoes, even residing in the broiling magma while sustaining no harm. There is no clear-cut definition of how heat-resistant a dragon should be... a matter of great contestation by the Oroboroi who practice this Ablution.

If this Ablution is manifest to any degree, the size of a flame or heat source no longer contributes to the damage it inflicts on the Oroboros. In addition, for each point manifest in this Ablution she ignores one level of heat from the flame. That is, at one point manifest she treats torches like candles and at three points manifest she completely ignores molten metal. At high levels of manifestation she can even descend into churning magma unscathed.

If she is ever attacked by flames, including the flames of another Oroboros' Inferno, she ignores a number of successes equal to the points manifest in this Ablution. Also, said protection guarantees she cannot catch fire while the intensity of the flames is lower than the points manifest.

For one point of Breath, the Oroboros may cause anyone she touches to be burned, as if by fire of heat intensity equal to the points manifest in this Ablution. It is a favorite move by dragons that are struggling in a grapple.

[GMC] This Ablution also lets the Oroboros treat Extreme Environments that are heat-oriented as one rating less severe per point manifest. For example, with four points manifest, a desert (level 3) would be completely safe for the Oroboros. She also ignores heat-based conditions and tilts.

For more information on fire consult the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 180.

[GMC] For more information on extreme environments, consult the **God Machine Chronicles** Rulebook, page 213.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to burn opponents this turn.

Dice Pool: None
Action: Reflexive

Reptilian Fear

The dragon knows how to make use of her cold-blooded half, and people around her notice. She utilizes this trait when she wants to acquire something through force, or if she wants to better relate with the animal kingdom. As material kings, this is often an essential trait to bear.

Mortals are ill at ease around the dragon, making threats and hard leverage more effective. The dragon gains a +1 bonus to Intimidation for each odd point manifest. On the other side of the coin, creatures find it easier to relate to the dragon. She gains a +1 bonus to Animal Ken for each even point manifest.

When an Intimidation or Animal Ken roll that was not a chance die is resolved, roll a number of additional chance dice equal to the odd points manifest in this Ablution. Add any successes from these dice to your total. These chance dice do not risk dramatic failure.

The Oroboros may also spend one Breath to go into an angry tirade. Any targets at which she directs her rage lose a number of Willpower points equal to the points manifest in this Ablution on a success. Supernatural beings may apply their Furnace (or other supernatural trait) against this loss, provided it matches or exceeds the ranting dragon's Furnace.

Type: Odd over Even

Cost: 1 Breath to Tirade

Dice Pool: Presence + Intimidation (to Tirade)

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The dragon sets the whole room laughing. Everyone recovers one point of Willpower and the dragon suffers a -3 penalty to Intimidation for the rest of the scene.

Failure: The tirade has no effect.

Success: The tirade demoralizes the mortals at which it is directed. Each loses a number of Willpower points equal to the points manifest in Reptilian Fear.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the point of Breath is refunded.

Draconic Strength

Dragons are strong. They can carry castles on their backs. But some humans who become Oroboroi can barely lift a feather. Hyperbole aside, to build

mountain-shaking Strength of legend the dragon uses this Ablution.

Like the bedrock of mountains, the sinews of the dragon are as strong as coiled steel. For each point manifest the dragon gets a +1 bonus to Strength. In addition, the points manifest in this Ablution act as a multiplier to the throwing distance of all objects, and as a bonus to lifting those objects (That is, the Ablution counts twice towards calculating lifting Strength). For more information on lifting objects, see page 47 in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook. For more information on throwing objects, see page 67 in that same book.

For one point of Breath this turn, add the lifting bonus again... a number of times equal to Draconic Strength. This is the equivalent of adding the square of Draconic Strength (so +1 for 1 point manifest and +16 for 4 points manifest). For an Oroboros with Strength 3 and Draconic Strength 4, her effective lifting Strength would be $(3+4+4) \times (4 \times 4)$ or rather 27, enough to lift 18000 lbs! That's enough to lift a howitzer, with strength to spare!

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to use tremendous Strength

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

Attribute Bumps

Certain Ablutions, as well as True Form, grant bonuses to attributes. These bonuses not only increase dice pools, but also alter derived traits. It's important to keep track of which traits are changed by which attribute, but if you can't remember here's a quick guide.

Speed: Strength + Dexterity + 5

Health: Stamina + Size

Willpower: Resolve + Composure

Defense: Lower of Dexterity or Wits

Initiative Mod: Dexterity + Composure

Also important to note is the attribute limit imposed by Furnace. Or rather, that it only applies to basic attributes and not those modified by Ablutions. If a dragon has a Strength rating of 5 and Strength limit of 5, she may still use this Ablution to increase her Strength (up to 10 if she owns all five dots).

Gravedigger

It is said that true tyrants are invigorated by the despair of their victims. This Ablution grants an Oroboros the same invigoration; she is rejuvenated

by beating a foe into surrender. The joy of inflicting pain brings soothing calm to her mind.

While this Ablution is manifest, the Oroboros recovers Willpower whenever an opponent flees or surrenders, one per point manifest in the Ablution (so having Gravedigger 4 manifest means 4 Willpower restored when an opponent surrenders). The Oroboros receives this benefit so long as she is a witness to the combat; she does not need to cause the surrender directly. To get the benefit from fleeing opponents, the Oroboros must give chase (but not necessarily CATCH them). There is a reduced benefit for beating an opponent unconscious, without being aware of their defeat and submitting to the dragon's power they only replenish a number of Willpower points equal to the odd points manifest in this Ablution.

If the Oroboros kills an opponent directly, she replenishes a number of Willpower points equal to the even points manifest in this Ablution.

For a point of Breath, the Oroboros gains a number of heroic Health dots equal to the amount of Willpower recovered. These dots remain for the scene, and unlike temporary Health any wounds recorded on them vanish when they do. For more information on heroic Health, see page **XX** in Chapter Two.

[GMC] The benefit of Gravedigger is applied whenever the Beaten Down Tilt is imposed (page 206) or if an opponent flees and causes a foot-chase.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to acquire heroic Health

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

Delve

Traits infused with the dust and knowledge of ruinous history. Dragons of the Delver method get a discount when purchasing these Ablutions.

Master of Secrets

Dragons are smart. They'd have to be to stay sane over all the long years of their lifetime. If a dragon had memory problems, her double life could end quickly in a lapse of poor judgment, or out of fear that she'd expose the Oroboroi lifestyle. So dragons stay sharp, and those that really need to stay on the ball use this Ablution.

Each point manifest grants the dragon a +1 bonus to Intelligence. In addition, research roll times are reduced to a fraction with denominator equal to the points manifest in this Ablution (so

manifesting two points halves research time and manifesting five points reduces it to one fifth. Round down). Dragons very practiced in this Ablution can research at breakneck speeds.

For a point of Breath this turn, the Oroboros may multiply the skill rating used in the research by Master of Secrets for a single roll in the extended action.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to use immense skill this roll

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

Motion: Burrow

Not every dragon hides in the clouds. Cave-dwelling dragons dig deeper and deeper tunnels to hide their treasure, and those who make use of this trait do the same. Oroboros who incorporate Burrow into their divinity have a particular affinity for the earth and its minerals, and find it a much safer hiding place when the heat is on. They move through the ground as freely as if it were air.

The dragon has the distinct ability of effortlessly and painlessly digging through earth, usually to evade pursuit. She may move through soft soil at a rate of (Strength + Dexterity) x Burrow yards per turn, or hard ground at a rate in yards equal to just Burrow. Digging is a full action. That means she cannot attack while she is burrowing, and likewise defense is sacrificed. The associated cover and concealment are worth the gamble, though: each yard of soft earth she puts between herself and an opponent grants a point of cover and levies a -1 penalty against pursuers attempting to track her. Hard ground distance doubles this effect. If the cover exceeds 3, the dragon is fully concealed. For information on cover and concealment, see pages 162 and 163 in the **World of Darkness Rulebook**.

[GMC] Concealment penalties hinder the dragon's ability to attack back as well, though at a rating one less than the penalty she inflicts. Since this power is for retreat, it is rarely an issue.

Alternatively, the dragon may use this Ablution to scale vertical grades effortlessly, climbing at the same speed as she would dig. Climbing does not grant cover but also only requires a move action. Outside of combat, climbing on walls grants a +2 to stealth-based rolls and climbing on a ceiling grants a +4 to those same rolls (nobody ever looks up).

It is assumed both the soft soil and the hard ground involve materials that have room to give way, like sand or asphalt. Were she to attempt to burrow through a solid surface (Like reinforced

steel), she must first spend a point of Breath to destabilize the matter within the surface. She may then burrow as if through hard materials for a single turn.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to dig through solids this turn

Dice Pool: None

Action: Full

Envoy's Passage

Oftentimes a dragon does not start at the top.

Frequently, she may have no association with a group from which she needs favors. But rather than earning them, she can project an air of status that will get her in the door; at least briefly.

When interacting with a member of an organization, the member treats the dragon as if she is also a member, with Status equal to the odd points manifest in Envoy's Passage for the purpose of access to resources and with Contacts equal to the even points manifest for the purpose of supplying information. In fact, if she increases or decreases points manifest, these ratings also change. The Ablution grants her no actual credentials, just the semblance of "being in charge".

If she doesn't play along with somebody of higher standing in the organization, it's likely her ruse will be unveiled. Also, if she happens to encounter two members of rival organizations they will both treat her with this respect... up until the confusion that the Oroboros appears to be a double agent. Finally, some particularly attentive members of the group may question her sudden appearance once she's gone, as the Ablution does not actually supply credentials. For a point of Breath, she may dispel this unease by planting a plausible explanation, but only for those that are currently questioning her... and then only for a number of minutes equal to Envoy's Passage.

For more information on Status, see the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 116. For more information on Contacts, see the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 114.

[GMC] In GMC, Status can be found on page 170 and Contacts can be found on page 166. When using this Ablution, it counts as the supernatural removal of doors, equal to whichever rating is utilized (So using the Ablution's Status rating removes doors equal to the odd points manifest, and using the Ablution's Contacts rating removes doors equal to the even points manifest.

Type: Odd over Even

Cost: 1 Breath to explain away contradictory credentials for Envoy's Passage minutes

Dice Pool: None

Action: None

Eye of Value

You'd think with all that treasure a dragon would know the difference between an antique and a cheap knockoff. But of course such knowledge only comes from extensive training. Some dragons prefer to save themselves the trouble, though, and those that do use this Ablution.

Whereas most delves into the history of an object can take months of research, a dragon with Eye of Value can simply study it briefly and learn a great deal. In fact, depending on her luck she can learn absolutely everything about something practically instantaneously.

The dragon using Eye of Value may make a single research roll over the course of thirty-seconds, using Intelligence + Academics for her dice pool. The roll is penalized based on the object's apparent value (but not its actual value). If her analysis pays off, she'll learn a number of traits the object possesses equal to Eye of Value. The first such glance in the scene is free, but subsequent uses require the expenditure of a point of Willpower.

For a point of Breath, she may study the object completely over the course of THREE seconds, rather than thirty. This gives her the ability to examine even an enemy's mysterious weaponry with tremendous scrutiny as it is being used against her.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Willpower for subsequent glances in the Scene. 1 Breath for a single-turn examination.

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Academics

Action: Extended (1 success; a single roll is made over the course of 30 seconds), Instant if Breath is used

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The dragon believes she's discovered the function of the object, but it is something completely different. If she thinks it's valuable, it's actually a piece of junk. If she thinks it's junk, it's priceless. She cannot attempt to appraise this object again.

Failure: The nature of the object eludes the dragon. She remains unsure of the object's actual history and worth.

Success: The dragon learns a number of facts about the object equal to her points manifest in Eye

of Value. Facts can be about the object's origin, age, function, worth, or hazardous mystical properties. Further research may be warranted, but the initial appraisal has paid off.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the dragon learns of any other, more subtle mystical properties it may contain, and how she might tap into those properties.

Tactful Precision

Dragons, more so than the humans they used to be, are aware of the benefits of patience. A moment to assess the situation leads to clarity, and in turn the best way to proceed.

When an Oroboros manifests this Ablution, she gains the ability to quickly calculate the most likely outcome and adjust her actions accordingly. This functions as a universal aiming technique; the dragon may sacrifice turns to assess the possibilities and add an additional die to her pool, up to a maximum equal to the points manifest in this Ablution. This "aiming" with Tactful Precision may be performed on ANY action, including those that are not combat-related (such as aiming for an attempted system hack). In addition, she need not be immobile to assess the situation; she does not lose her movement or defense by using this Ablution. For more information on aiming, see page 162 of that same book.

Contested actions cannot benefit from this Ablution, and the amount of time necessary to apply Tactful Precision to an extended action is based on the roll time of that action. For example, assessing a research project with 30 minute rolls takes 30 minutes per bonus die desired. Once the bonus die is affixed to an extended action, it applies to all subsequent rolls in that action. Going back to the research example, taking two hours to assess the problem grants four bonus dice for all the rolls to follow; until the task is complete or the dragon is exhausted.

If at any point during the assessment the Ablution is manifest to a degree lesser than the bonus accrued, all bonus dice in excess of the active points are lost. For more information on extended actions, see page 127 in the **World of Darkness Rulebook**.

[GMC] Extended actions have updated rules, as detailed on page 187 of the **God Machine Chronicles**.

Type: Sequential

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

Weaponry: Cestus SAP

Dragons were not legendary simply for their longevity and fortitude. They were dangerous, and they had a personal arsenal of biological weapons to throw at their enemies. This weapon is the sap, a force-diffusing pack of shot designed to deliver knock-out blows.

Along the knuckles of the fists the dragon possesses rough pouches filled with rattlesnake beads (or in the absence of an appropriate tell, a pocket of ultra-dense air). These beads (or the air pocket) disperse the force of a blow across the entire fist, increasing the chance of rendering a foe unconscious. This weapon only does bashing damage (with a rating of four to be specific), but it has the "Reliable" feature equal to the points manifest in this Ablution. Reliable allows a player to re-roll a number of failed dice equal to its rating. That player may roll and re-roll single failed dice selectively until she has rolled as many as the feature's rating, or until there are no more failed dice. More information on the Reliable feature can be found in the Bombastic Combat Features section of Chapter Two, on page **XX**.

The Cestus SAP may be used with unarmed fighting styles, such as Boxing. It also ignores the special form of damage reduction granted by Impervious Hide and other downgrades, always inflicting bashing damage against its target.

For a point of Breath this turn, the roll also counts ones as successes.

[GMC] The shot pouches are size 0 and have no initiative modification or strength requirement. They use the Sap weapon profile which can be found on page 204 of the **God Machine Chronicles**, with a damage rating of 3 Bashing and the Stun quality. This makes them highly likely to cause the Stunned tilt, which is detailed on page 212 of the same book.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to invert dramatic failures

Dice Pool: Strength + Brawl

Action: Instant

Challenge

Traits infused with the spirit of competition, Ablutions categorized under Challenge seek to express excellence in all avenues of talent. Dragons of the Challenger method get a discount when purchasing these Ablutions.

Hoard of Knowledge

While it pays to be a master in many fields, sometimes an Oroboros needs the benefit of an encyclopedic mind without all that effort to become an expert. If she only needs a bit of anecdotal knowledge to get past an obstacle, she can turn to this Ablution in lieu of a textbook.

Each odd point manifest grants a +1 bonus to Academics, and each even point manifest grants a +1 bonus to Occult. In addition, within any conversation the dragon participates, she may pull plot-relevant information (up to her manifest points in factoids) from thin air by rolling Intelligence with a relevant mental skill. The first such use in a scene is free, but subsequent attempts require a point of Willpower.

When an Academics or Occult roll that was not a chance die is resolved, roll a number of additional chance dice equal to the odd points manifest in this Ablution. Add any successes from these dice to your total. These chance dice do not risk dramatic failure.

For one point of Breath this turn, turn any ones you rolled in both the rolls into successes.

[GMC] Fetching relevant information opens a number of doors equal to the points manifest in this Ablution. This is unique as it does not count as supernatural removal; rather it is the natural result of the staggering relevance of the facts summoned.

Type: Odd over Even

Cost: 1 Willpower for subsequent info fetches this scene, 1 Breath to invert dramatic failures

Dice Pool: Intelligence + Relevant Mental Skill

Action: Reflexive (Attributes) or Instant (Info)

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The factoids are wrong, but the dragon is so convincing her words are taken as fact. Though this can sometimes be harmless, it often explodes in the dragon's face.

Failure: The factoids are useless or irrelevant.

Success: The factoids deftly sum up the discussion in a neat package, or leads to a breakthrough that advances the discussion's goals. The dragon is likely praised for her input.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the dragon recovers her spent Willpower and may attempt to fetch another set of factoids in the same conversation.

Weaponry: Flogging Cable

Dragons were not legendary simply for their longevity and fortitude. They were dangerous, and they had a personal arsenal of biological weapons to throw at their enemies. This weapon is the bullwhip, binding foes as it flogs them to ribbons.

A set of spinnerets form on the dragon's main wrist. When utilized, braided threads of silk emit from these spinnerets, with the thickness and consistency of industrial cable and with length roughly the same as the dragon's height (or in the absence of an appropriate tell, an equivalently sized pocket of high-pressure air). The dragon uses this cable as a whip, both terribly lashing foes and assisting with grapple attempts. This weapon has the "Sticky Grasp" feature with a rating equal to the points manifest in this Ablution. Sticky Grasp is triggered by a grapple attempt. This feature adds its rating as a bonus to the grapple. For rules on grappling, see the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, page 157, and for rules on Sticky Grasp specifically see page ~~XX~~ in Chapter two of this book.

The Oroboros may shed the cable voluntarily, but to form another in the same scene causes her to suffer a single lethal wound. If detached, the cable lingers for one hour and then breaks down into a tangle of cobwebs.

For a point of Breath this turn, the Sticky Grasp feature's rating is doubled.

[GMC] The cable is size 3 and has a -2 initiative modification and a strength requirement of 1. It uses the Chain weapon profile which can be found on page 205 of the **God Machine Chronicles**, with a damage rating of 1 Lethal and the Grapple quality. The Grapple quality is mechanically identical to Sticky Grasp. For GMC grappling rules, see page 199 in that same book.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Lethal wound to spawn secondary cables, 1 Breath to double Sticky Grasp

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Brawl

Action: Instant

Binding Oath

Dragons are creatures of majesty and pride—or at least they tell themselves that—and so a dragon's words blaze with the same strength as her Furnace. Some take their promises quite seriously, and their devotion does not go unrewarded.

For each point manifest in this Ablution the dragon receives a +1 bonus on tasks directly related to her promises. In addition, any mortals in her vicinity are driven to keep their own promises, to the point of suffering a -1 penalty per point the

dragon has manifest in this Ablution when acting against a promise. The weight of a promise kept bleeds into the world around her.

For one point of Breath this turn, the bonus and penalty applies towards combat, with the bonus benefitting the Oroboros herself and the penalty affecting anyone taking hostile action against her.

Type: Sequential

Cost: None

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

Motion: Photosynthesis

The essence of life has many forms but there is none more pure than the light of the sun, a shining beacon of warmth and nourishment for the extensive flora that populates the Earth. Dragons with this Ablution take in the sun just like a plant, supplementing their nutrition and their respiration in equal portions.

Photosynthesis converts solar energy to sugars through the use of Carbon Dioxide. As Carbon Dioxide is a waste gas from the ATP process used by animals, an Oroboros that can perform both greatly reduces the amount of breathable air she requires to survive, as she can simply cycle her gasses back and forth between the plant and animal cells. While manifesting this Ablution, the dragon may add Photosynthesis to her Stamina for the purpose of determining how long she can hold her breath. Holding breath is detailed on page 49 of the **World of Darkness** Rulebook.

Photosynthesis also helps stave off the ravages of extreme hunger. The dragon may spend a point of Breath to draw nutrients from the environment. This serves as automatic successes towards a foraging attempt, equal to Photosynthesis at the time of payment. The attempt also benefits from the Reliable feature with rating equal to Photosynthesis. For more information on foraging see page 77 in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, and for information on deprivation see page 175 in that same book.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to draw nutrients

Dice Pool: None

Action: None

Impassioned Effort

Driven by their sheer force of will, some dragons have bursts of incredible talent; the scope of which are wholly legendary. It's not surprising they were

treated as gods. What was actually a moment of passion became a symbol of divinity, and the dragon was more than happy to accept the praise.

When a dragon with this Ablution manifest uses Willpower to increase her dice pool or resistance traits, the bonus is bumped up by her manifest points in Impassioned Effort. For example, a dragon with Impassioned Effort 4 could spend a point of Willpower to add +7 to her attack instead of the usual +3. For more information on augmenting rolls with Willpower, see the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 95.

For a point of Breath this turn, the dragon may use a single point of Willpower to boost both an action AND a resistance trait simultaneously.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to use Double-Edged Willpower

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

Master and Student

More a reflection of the training that precedes a battle of skill, the rote talent that costs arrogant dragons their Hearts through contest bleeds over into this trait. This Ablution gives the Oroboros the ability to widen the gap between her skill and that of her opponent.

When competing with a mortal in a contested action, the Oroboros that uses this Ablution gifts the opponent a number of 'debt dice' equal to Master and Student, to be rolled after his normal pool. If a debt dice shows a 1, 2, or 3, it *subtracts* a success from the opponent's total. Also, if it shows a 1 it must be rolled again.

For a point of Breath this turn, the Oroboros also forces the opponent to reroll a number of successful dice equal to Master and Student.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to force reroll of successes

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

Grift

Traits laced with the treachery of the con, Ablutions categorized under Grift circumvent the restrictions of law. Dragons of the Grifter method get a discount when purchasing these Ablutions.

Weaponry: Spike Cannon

Dragons were not legendary simply for their longevity and fortitude. They were dangerous, and they had a personal arsenal of biological weapons to

throw at their enemies. This weapon is the Gatling spike, a palm-buried fully automatic firearm.

Embedded in the palm of the dragon's main hand is a repository of modified scales, similar to shark's teeth (or in the absence of an appropriate tell, palm-sized bolts of electricity). At will, the dragon with this Ablution may fire a burst of these spikes, with an effective short range of 25 yards. Instead of using burst mechanics, this weapon has the "Sweeping Hit" feature equal to the points manifest in this Ablution. Sweeping Hit attacks multiple targets at once, up to its rating. One roll is made, taking into account the highest hostile armor and lowest hostile defense. Successes inflict equal wounds to all targets. "Sweeping Hit" attacks instigated with the cannon are made with Dexterity + Firearms, and the base damage rating is two lethal.

Sweeping hit does not suffer multiple target penalties like a firearm burst because of the biological trigger mechanism. The Oroboros may also choose to exclude friendly targets or bystanders from the attack, but they still count as a target for the purpose of the Ablution's limits, as well as the penalties invoked. For more information on the Sweeping Hit feature, see page **XX** in Chapter Two.

Each sweep uses ten spikes, and the dragon using this Ablution has a reservoir of roughly thirty spikes per scene. When she has depleted her reserves, she may reload her arsenal with a point of Breath.

In addition, for a point of Breath this turn the Oroboros may double the rating of Sweeping Hit.

[GMC] The cannon is size 1 and has a -1 initiative modification and a strength requirement of 1. It is modeled after the small SMG which is referenced on page 201 of the **God Machine Chronicles**. with a damage rating of 1 Lethal. It uses the same Sweep mechanic as detailed above.

Due to its nature this Ablution has restricted tells.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to reload, 1 Breath to double Sweeping Heat

Dice Pool: Dexterity + Firearms

Action: Instant

Motion: Serpentine

Explorers used to mark uncharted regions on maps with the phrase "Here be dragons". They would also draw serpents in the waters. There's more fact than myth with these practices as far as the Oroboroi are concerned.

The dragon is possessed of snakelike flexibility, and the added finesse improves her balance greatly. She receives a bonus to rolls within a grapple (but not rolls to begin a grapple) equal to the points manifest in this Ablution.

In addition, she may treat herself as a smaller size for the purpose of traversing tight spaces. When spelunking, her effective size is reduced by the even points manifest in this Ablution, to a minimum of size 2. She may also treat herself as a larger size for the purpose of a grapple: when grappling, her effective size is increased by the odd points manifest in this Ablution, with no strict maximum.

Finally, she may take to water like an aquatic mammal. Ordinarily swimming would involve an extended action with Athletics, but for an Oroboros with this Ablution manifest she swims as if she were born in the sea. The dragon's swim speed is set to Strength + Athletics + Serpentine.

For rules on grappling, see the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 157.

For one point of Breath this turn the Oroboros moves like water. She may break from a grapple without rolling (if in a grapple), trip an opponent, and move a number of yards equal to Serpentine as a reflexive action. Tripping an opponent knocks them prone without a roll; only those with Furnace higher than the Serpentine Oroboros can resist and they must use Willpower to do so.

[GMC] For GMC grappling rules, see page 199 in the **God Machine Chronicles** book. Be sure to read the GMC clarifications about Scale on page **XX** of this book.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to move like water

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

Fork-Tongued

The European mythos of dragon-kind weaves them as sly and eloquent monsters. Likewise when lizards and snakes are anthropomorphized their forked tongues are tools of social espionage, wielded as foils in social combat. These stereotypes have leached into dragon anatomy, making Oroboroi possessed of forked tongue excellent speakers.

For each odd point manifest, the dragon gains a +1 bonus to Subterfuge. For each even point manifest, the dragon gains a +1 bonus to Politics. The Oroboros may also manipulate a mortal into performing favors for her. A mortal that she

persuades in this manner must perform a number of tasks less than or equal to the points manifest that the Oroboros dictates, provided they are not inherently dangerous. This mortal is convinced the tasks are of his own volition and thus cannot resist if the roll is successful. He must attempt to complete them to the best of his ability and in a timely manner. Supernatural beings may spend Willpower to cancel out tasks assigned on a one-for-one basis, provided their Furnace (or other relevant trait) is equal to or greater than that of the Oroboros using this Ablution.

When a Subterfuge or Politics roll that was not a chance die is resolved, roll a number of additional chance dice equal to the odd points manifest in this Ablution. Add any successes from these dice to your total. These chance dice do not risk dramatic failure.

For a point of Breath this turn, the mortal victim of forked tongue's favor also loses a number of points of Willpower equal to Forked Tongue. If this exceeds his limit, he suffers the excess as bashing wounds. However, he gains a bonus to actions related to the task equal to Forked Tongue.

[GMC] Using the manipulation of this Ablution removes a number of doors equal to the points manifest when requesting favors. The removal applies to all the social exchanges required to request the tasks. That is, if three points are manifest and the Oroboros needs three favors, then three doors are supernaturally removed from each of the three conversations to request the three favors. If any doors remain after this supernatural influence, they must be opened through normal means, but the Oroboros treats the subject as if she has established a perfect impression for the rest of the scene *for the purpose of opening doors related to the favors*. For more information on doors and impressions, see pages 192 through 194 in the **God Machine Chronicles**.

Type: Odd over Even

Cost: 1 Breath to deplete Willpower

Dice Pool: Manipulation + Socialize (to draw Favors)

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The dragon frustrates her target. He refuses to do any of the tasks and she suffers a -3 penalty to Socialize for the rest of the scene.

Failure: The attempted persuasion has no effect.

Success: The dragon successfully convinces the target that he is motivated to perform the favors. He will attempt them to the best of his ability and as soon as he is able. If any of the favors put him in apparent danger during the course of the fulfillment, he may abandon that particular favor with no consequence.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the target is forced to spend Willpower if available when performing the favors.

Venoms

Snakes have venom that disables their prey. Without a decent knowledge of snakes it is impossible to tell if it is venomous, pretending to be venomous or simply devoid of the dangerous substance. For those facing dragons with this Ablution... whoops, tough luck. This venom is practically impossible to detect until it is too late.

The dragon's sharp exposed extremities are all actually hollow, with a dose of poison waiting to burst forth from their tips. Whenever the dragon inflicts lethal damage, she exposes her victim to this nerve-locking chemical.

The venom inflicts trauma, with a rating equal to the points manifest in Venoms (which means its potency changes as the Ablution is assumed or disbanded). This trauma lingers until the subject is no longer suffering any lethal wounds, or until the end of the scene (whichever comes first). As a quick summary, those who suffer Trauma cannot move more than half their speed or apply defense; if they do they suffer a penalty to act equal to the Trauma's rating. Trauma is explained in further detail on page **XX** of Chapter Two.

It is important to note that this trauma does not stack with others inflicted by Venoms, so its rating is only ever the points manifest in Venoms. If multiple dragons attack with Venoms, only the highest applies. Trauma from Venoms also resolves at the end of the scene, whereas regular Trauma only resolves from the removal of all lethal wounds.

For a point of Breath this turn, the trauma the Oroboros inflicts has twice the normal rating.

[GMC] Use the Trauma tilt that is detailed in Chapter Two of **Dragon the Embers** on page **XX**.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to trigger Double Trauma

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

Trauma is very a very useful combat infliction, but in the case of Venoms it is only as potent as the dragon's poison. Though highly unlikely, should a dragon disband some points of Venoms while trauma is in effect, trauma is likewise decreased. For example, if a dragon were to move from Venoms 5 to Venoms 4 while an enemy is suffering Trauma 5, that enemy would then only suffer Trauma 4. Trauma itself is a new combat affliction introduced in this book. You can read more about it in Chapter 2 on page **XX**.

Obsidian Fog

A defense mechanism of cephalopods in the brighter surface waters, the ink sac produces a spray of mucus-locked melanin. Effective but costly to produce, this clod of dark liquid distracts and sometimes even stuns predators. Some dragons have developed similar versions for use on land.

The dragon may expel a pitch-black gas from a modified pore on her face. This gas quickly envelops everything within twenty-five yards of its source, creating a pocket of complete darkness through which the dragon may escape undetected. The first such expulsion of the scene is free, but subsequent uses require a point of Willpower.

All beings within the Obsidian Fog are rendered completely blind for a number of turns equal to the points manifest in this Ablution. This of course means that changing the degree of manifestation in the Ablution also alters the duration of the fog (adding or subtracting a turns per point altered). The dragon is excluded: she can perfectly detect the positions of her opponents by the electric impulses of their muscles.

The fog is technically a type of darkness, and thus is subject to the conditions of fighting blind as detailed in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, pages 166 and 167. Still, it is a tangible substance... a darkness preternatural un-pierced by torch or flashlight. These tools suffer a penalty to function in the fog equal to the points manifest in this Ablution.

For a point of Breath this turn, the fog causes a toxic coughing fit. All but the dragon enveloped must sacrifice their movement or defense.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Willpower for subsequent uses in the scene, 1 Breath to trigger a coughing fit

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

Soothing Incense

Not so much a trait of dragons as it is a feature of fire in general, there is something about the waft of scented smoke that is... relaxing. When the dragon uses this Ablution the heat of their Furnace cloys in the air and falls as heavy smoke from the nostrils.

The mystic aromatic smoke of this Ablution makes the dragon an instant socialite. For each odd point manifest, she gains a +1 bonus to Socialize, and for each even point manifest she gains a +1 bonus to Empathy. The Oroboros manifesting this Ablution may also expel a cloud of smoke in a target's face, inducing a hallucinogenic state until the end of the scene. The first such use in a scene is free, but subsequent uses require a point of Willpower. The hallucinogen is as potent as the odd points manifest in this Ablution. Supernatural beings may spend Willpower to shake off the drugged state at a rate of one point per potency reduced, provided their Furnace (or other relevant trait) is equal to or greater than that of the Oroboros using this Ablution. For more information on drugs and hallucinogens in particular, see pages 176 and 177 in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook.

When a Socialize or Empathy roll that was not a chance die is resolved, roll a number of additional chance dice equal to the odd points manifest in this Ablution. Add any successes from these dice to your total. These chance dice do not risk dramatic failure.

For one point of Breath this turn, the expulsion of smoke affects everyone within Furnace yards of the Oroboros... excluding only those she does not wish to dose.

[GMC] If the target of the hallucinogenic smoke enters combat, he does so with the Drugged Tilt. To learn more about the Drugged tilt, see page 208 in the **God Machine Chronicles**.

Type: Odd over Even

Cost: 1 Breath to drug all targets in range

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant (Exhaling Smoke)

Entitle

Traits of regality, Ablutions logged in Entitle solidify the power of royalty. Dragons of the Inheritor method get a discount when purchasing these Ablutions.

Weaponry: Razor Fins

Dragons were not legendary simply for their longevity and fortitude. They were dangerous, and

they had a personal arsenal of biological weapons to throw at their enemies. This weapon is the razor fin, a set of serrated blades that deflect blows and injure attackers.

Sharp fins spawn on the dragon's forearms, along the ulna and perpendicular to the wrist (or in the absence of an appropriate tell, pockets of high-density air form in the same shape). The dragon with this Ablution does not actually attack with the fins. Rather, they assist her in defense. The Razor Fins give the Oroboros the passive combat quality "Bed of Thorns". This quality was described on page **XX** of Chapter Two, but is revisited here. When her defense applies, aggressors must choose between a penalty to attack or a set of bashing wounds, equal to half the rating (rounded up). For this Ablution that is the equivalent of the odd points manifest. If the bearer of "Bed of Thorns" has taken a dodge action, the full rating is applied instead. For this Ablution, that means a dodging Oroboros with Razor Fins manifest at 4 imposes an ultimatum of 4 Bashing wounds or -4 to attack, or any intermediate permutation (such as -3 to attack and 1 Lethal wound, at attacker discretion).

For a point of Breath this turn, the rating of Bed of Thorns is doubled.

[GMC] As explained in Chapter Two of this book (on page **XX**), "Bed of Thorns" adds its rating to the Dodge dice pool, and the successes negated are inflicted back on the attacker as bashing wounds.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to double Bed of Thorns

Dice Pool: None

Action: Instant

Hunter's Tracking

The footprints a person leaves in their wake are not simply physical; their impact has a far more lasting effect than is immediately apparent. Like the great game hunters of history, dragons can pick up on cold or even buried trails if they need to find information.

Each odd point manifest grants a +1 bonus to Investigation, and each even point manifest grants a +1 bonus to Computers. The dragon may search for a specified target simply by observing him in media (magazines, television interviews, newspapers, and so on). This is an extended research roll in thirty second intervals with a maximum number of rolls equal to her Resolve. The required number of successes is dependent on the obscurity of the subject, but the attempt starts with free successes equal to the points manifest in Hunter's Tracking.

Such scouring has its limitations, though, and can normally only be attempted once per day per subject. Still, if the dragon does not learn enough to locate her target, she can always hit the beat. After all the rolls are used up, the dragon may apply the successes to a traditional extended investigation, though this usually takes *much* longer.

For a point of Breath this turn, the Oroboros can media scour through an opponent, provided the opponent is somehow connected for the person she is seeking. By rolling Wits + Investigation she reads his expression and learns everything she needs to know. Success in this instant action is the same as the result of an extended scour.

[Mirrors] This Ablution's bonus to Computers is actually a bonus to the modern equivalent of mass media. For games set in other time periods or worlds that do not possess this technology, you can justify the Ablution giving its bonus to a Computers replacement because it is really boosting the dragon's skill with the period's Media.

Type: Odd over Even

Cost: 1 Breath for instant Hunter's Tracking

Dice Pool: Wits + Investigation or Wits + Computers depending on media observed.

Action: Extended (4-30 Successes; each roll represents thirty seconds of scouring; a maximum of Resolve rolls may be made) or Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: All accumulated successes are lost, and the Media Scour is concluded. The dragon cannot try again for twenty-four hours.

Failure: No successes are accumulated.

Success: Successes are accumulated toward the target value, which varies depending on how obscure the person sought may be. Celebrities are always easier to find than some random office worker who just happened to swipe a dragon Heart. If the extended action as a whole is successful, the Oroboros learns where she must go to find the target.

Exceptional Success: A massive number of successes are accumulated toward the target value. If the target value is exceeded by 5 or more successes, the dragon instantly knows exactly where the target is and where he will most likely be for the next few days.

Regal Stature

Playing more on the idea of dragons as movers and shakers and less on the idea of them as massive fire-breathing monsters, Regal Stature provides a level of impact to the Oroboroi presence in a room.

Dragons take this trait when they want to be seen, and want their words to be heard.

Each point manifest grants the dragon a +1 bonus to Presence. In addition, people find it difficult to draw their attention away from the dragon. With regards to anything *not* in the immediate vicinity of the dragon: mortals suffer a penalty to perception equal to the points manifest in this Ablution. Supernatural beings are immune, provided their Furnace (or other supernatural trait) is equal to or greater than that of the dragon using this Ablution.

For a point of Breath this turn, the Oroboros may steal points of Willpower from the people around her, one per victim up to a total equal to Regal Stature. The points depleted from her victims are used to replenish her own meter.

[GMC] While this Ablution is manifest, the Oroboros opens doors to successes on a one-to-one basis; five successes opens five doors instead of two. For more information on doors and social maneuvering, see page 192 in the **God Machine Chronicles**.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to pilfer Willpower

Dice Pool: None

Action: Reflexive

Mesmerizing Eyes

Fabled serpents have stares that cannot be broken; stares that hypnotize and pacify their prey. Dragons, on the other hand, can use such stares on both prey and predators, provided they've incorporated this trait into their form.

By locking eyes with her mark the dragon can jinx him with her gaze. All actions the mark would take against the dragon suffer a penalty to act equal to the points manifest in this Ablution, until he succeeds at a roll of his Composure (this roll is subjected to the penalty as well). The penalty the mark suffers only applies to actions directed at the Dragon, but he must give up an instant action for each effort he intends to take against someone else. Once he has succeeded at his Composure roll, both the dice-pool penalty and the delay of action for redirect are lifted.

After the first use of the scene, further gaze jinxes with this Ablution cost one point of Willpower.

For a point of Breath this turn the Oroboros may strengthen the Jinx, forcing the victim to lose all actions this turn. Such expenditure is reflexive.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Willpower for subsequent gazes in the scene, 1 Breath to paralyze the victim

Dice Pool: Composure + Expression - Resolve

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The gaze backfires, and the dragon finds herself unable to escape the eyes of her mark. She loses her Defense for the turn, and then the gaze ends.

Failure: The mark is not trapped in the gaze, and does not suffer the associated penalties and delays.

Success: The mark becomes trapped in the gaze of the dragon, suffering a penalty to act equal to the points manifest in Mesmerizing Eyes. If he wishes to act against anyone other than the dragon, he must give up an instant action first (usually delaying him one turn).

Exceptional Success: Identical to success, but the Willpower is not spent.

Motion: Electromagnetism

More demonic than divine, the idea of a monster moving something without actually touching it was often written off as dark sorcery in the past. As the world becomes more rational these situations develop rational explanations (machines, sleight of hand, magnetism) but become no less disturbing to witness. In the case of an Oroboros with this Ablution the rational explanations fall short.

The Oroboros may magnetize her hands to attract or repel a metallic object that she can see (regardless of whether the metal is normally magnetically reactive). Her capacity to move such objects is not measured by her Strength, but rather by using the points manifest in Electromagnetism on the Lifting table. For example, at Electromagnetism 4, an object magnetized by the dragon could be drawn in or repelled so long as it weighs less than the lifting chart's 4th category. Drawing in an object is mechanically equivalent to lifting it, and repelling an object is mechanically equivalent to throwing it (though it is thrown from a distance to begin with, so its range is increased). Lifting is explained on page 47 of the **World of Darkness** Rulebook and Throwing is explained on page 64 of that same book.

When magnetized, the Oroboros may also use her hands as a shield against metal projectiles. She gains an invisible barrier of full cover with durability equal to the points manifest in this Ablution, which she may use as long as she has not sacrificed or depleted her defense. Having

durability, the barrier absorbs successes from any metal attacks (weaponry, thrown and projectile all apply), stopping any attack that does not exceed the barrier's protection. Such projectiles seem to bend and compress against the unseen barrier. Because the Oroboros has to be aware of the attack, it still causes the successive depletion of her Defense trait in the course of the turn. For more information on Cover, see page 162 in the **World of Darkness Rulebook**, and for more information on durability see page 135 in that same book. The magnetic barrier does not have a structure rating and is considered indestructible so long as the Oroboros has Defense to expend.

For a point of Breath this turn, the weight that can be lifted is Furnace x Electromagnetism rather than just Electromagnetism. The distance she may throw the object this turn is increased by that same amount in yards.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Breath to magnetize hands this scene

Dice Pool: None

Action: None

Tempest Roar

Some dragons have shouts that piece the eardrums, but *these* dragons move their prey with the sheer force of their roar. Those before her scatter like paper in the breeze when she screams—deafened—with only the hardiest holding their ground.

The Oroboros may roar by rolling Stamina + Presence. On a success, every living thing within 25 feet of the Oroboros that hears the roar can do nothing but flee for a number of turns equal to the points manifest in this Ablution. Anything more than 25 feet away but less than 50 feet also flees, but only for a number of turns equal to the even points manifest. Anything more than 50 feet away but less than 100 feet away does not flee but cannot approach for a number of turns equal to the even points manifest. Finally, anything further than 100 feet away is unaffected by the roar. The first such roar of a scene is free, but subsequent uses require a point of Willpower.

Those subjected to this Ablution may spend a point of Willpower to treat their distance as one category further than it is (so a mortal within 25 feet can spend Willpower to treat the distance as 50 feet for the purpose of duration of retreat). Supernatural beings may substitute Breath or their own energy for the same effect, and may pay multiple times (three points nullifies the effect of the Ablution).

The roar has the potential to be so loud that it damages the hearing of those in range. On an exceptional success, if the target's Stamina is less than the points manifest (within 25 feet) or the even points manifest (within 100 feet) then that target suffers hearing loss for the rest of the scene.

If the Oroboros wishes to protect friendly targets from her roar, she must spend a point of Breath when she makes the roar.

Type: Sequential

Cost: 1 Willpower for each subsequent roar in the scene, 1 Breath to protect allies

Dice Pool: Stamina + Presence

Action: Instant

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The dragon chokes on her roar and enters a coughing fit. She loses her next action and suffers a single point of bashing damage.

Failure: The roar lacks the force necessary to terrorize the dragon's enemies.

Success: Those within 25 feet of the roar run for their lives, for a number of turns equal to the points manifest. Those within 50 feet also flee, for a number of turns equal to the even points manifest. Those within 100 feet cannot approach for a number of turns equal to the even points manifest. Each target may spend a point of Willpower to treat their distance as one category further. Supernatural creatures may use Breath of energy for the same effect.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, no targets may use Willpower to react to a less severe distance. Within 25 feet, hearing loss occurs for any target whose Stamina is less than the points manifest in the Ablution. Within 100 feet, hearing loss occurs for any target whose Stamina is less than the even points manifest.

[GMC] The exceptional success deafness imposes the Deafened tilt, the two-ear version detailed on page 208 of the **God Machine Chronicles** book.

Ablution Factory

Now that you've seen the array of pre-made Ablutions, you possess enough information to create some of your own. Crafting an Ablution takes three steps:

Step 1: Create an Ability

Your Ablution should alter some way the dragon interacts with her world. For Sequential Ablutions, this advantage takes the form of an increasing bonus. For Odd over Even Ablutions, two advantages alternate between granting bonuses.

Step 2: Assign A Breath Boost

Each Ablution has an added advantage when used in combination with Breath. The boost lasts for only a single turn but should be both significant and related to the power it portrays. If you're stuck, tack on 'inverts Dramatic Failure' by making ones count as successes.

Step 3: Plan for the Worst

Try to envision what the Ablution would be like at full power, including the application of Breath to boost. If you are frightened by what you see, you need to make adjustments.

Edicts

Besides their introverted view, dragons are all possessed of extroverted opinions that they enforce on the world around them. Part of their divine right is the ability to impose things on matter by force-of-will, and Edicts are the roads dragons use to unlock that force.

The cynicisms and stereotypes of a particular train of thought become reality when they are focused into an Edict. The sheer force of will a dragon possesses is woven into their very fabric of existence at the fall of their words, leeching out of their mind and twisting the world around them to their preferences. It's good to be king.

When making a **Dragon** character, that character receives a fleeting two dots to place in Edicts, and one such dot must always be placed in the Edict that matches the dragon's Philosophy. These first two dots reflect the dragon's introduction to her new worldviews, and the influences that come with such worldviews. To review: Imperators begin with a dot of Fire, Paragons begin with a dot of Wood, Savants begin with a dot of Water, Viziers begin with a dot of Metal, and Caitiffs begin with a dot of Earth.

Each Edict is accompanied by three laws, with each Law bearing its own unique purpose. Individually, they can each turn the tide of a situation. On the other hand, if multiple laws of the same Edict are used in conjunction, their true purpose becomes clear. They are each in their own way designed to build a more complex manipulative strategy. Every time an Oroboroi acquires an Edict dot, she learns one of these laws (by choosing it from the list). Alternatively, she may forgo learning a new law and instead learn how to combine two laws she already knows into a single proclamation, creating a new and more potent law (for example, combining Familiar with Hybrid in the Husbandry Edict).

To use an Edict and its laws, an Oroboroi must make a proclamation. Each Law forms its dice pool from the lower of two Attributes and the dragon's proficiency in the Edict, plus the heat of her Furnace. It also requires a vocal declaration, such forms the link between the dragon's Heart and the heart of the Treasury; without the words to accompany the power a -5 penalty is imposed upon the roll. Each proclamation may only trigger one law of the Edict (paired law purchases count as a single, new law). All proclamations are instant actions.

Supernatural Conflict

All Edicts incorporate Furnace in their dice pool. As such, a target facing the Edict may subtract his Furnace from the attacking dragon's dice pool. This is supernatural resistance; the force of one dragon's will against another. But what happens if a dragon uses an Edict on another creature of the night? Are Vampires as vulnerable to the reality-bending will of a dragon as a mortal is? The answer is simply "no". In place of Furnace, any supernatural creature may ply their own fantastic nature against the dragon's will. For Vampires, that would be Blood Potency. For Werewolves, it's Primal Urge, Mages would subtract their Gnosis, and anything that possesses Preternatural Potency gets to use that trait to resist these powers. Supernatural Objects also have a type of Preternatural Potency, referred to in this book as its Artifact rating. An object's "Artifact" is equal to the number of Merit points associated with the object. Being possessed of an Artifact rating grants the object two benefits against Edicts:

- 1.) Any damage inflicted upon them is non-permanent, removed when the Edict expires.
- 2.) The Artifact rating inflicts a penalty on the activation roll of a proclamation against it.

Edicts determine how potent they are by an Effective Rating, measured in points just as manifest Ablutions are. The Effective Rating begins each scene equal to the dots known in the Edict. Every time a proclamation is resolved, the Edict's Effective Rating is reduced by one. Thus, each time an Oroboroi becomes repetitive with the same Edict, it becomes less powerful than before. Effective Rating is referenced law by law to varied effect,

controlling everything from duration to area of influence to number of targets. Effect rating can be boosted in four ways: it is raised by one for each point of Breath spent on the proclamation, it is raised by two if the proclamation meets the condition of an Ordinance the Oroboros owns, it is raised by two if the Oroboros makes the proclamation in the oldest dragon dialect (Draconic 3), and it is always raised by the dragon's current Divinity. All of these boosts are temporary, and do not mitigate the bleed of the Effect Rating during the scene. That is, if the Effect Rating began the turn at 4 and a proclamation is made, then it will begin the next turn at 3, regardless of how high the Oroboros pushed the effect rating DURING the turn. You can track the current Effect Rating of an Edict by checking off the boxes under the dots as proclamations are made.

<i>Fire</i>	<i>Metal</i>	<i>Polygraphy</i>
●●●●○	●●●●●	●●●●●
☒☒☒☐☐	☐☐☐☐☐	☒☐☐☐☐

In this example, Fire has an Effect Rating of 0, Metal has an Effect Rating of 5, and Polygraphy has an Effect Rating of 3.

To clarify, an Ordinance is in many ways like a specialty: it is purchased for a flat rate of experience and applies to one Edict. It might describe a type of target (such as "Squirrels" for the Husbandry Edict) or a specific situation (such as "Raining" for the Water Edict). All Ordinances require Storyteller approval to purchase, but each Philosophy begins play with one special free Ordinance (in the spirit of the philosophy's founder) that applies to ALL Edicts the Oroboros learns.

To summarize:

- Laws enable the Oroboroi to perform one particular action in the vein of the Edict.
- Dots in the Edict unlock one Law each. Once a Law is unlocked, the decision cannot be overturned. Laws can be unlocked in any order, and are each comparable in power. The first dot in an Edict always teaches the Veto Law for that Edict, explained below.
- Dots can be used to unlock a Law combination, but only if the character forgoes learning a new Law with that dot. Law combinations take two Laws and roll them into a single proclamation; the laws may be proclaimed in a single action and at the same effect rating but the mechanics are otherwise unchanged.
- All Edict proclamations are instant actions.
- An Edict's Effective Rating, frequently referenced by laws, begins each scene at the dots owned in the Edict. It is then increased by the Oroboroi's current Degree of Divinity. Each time an Edict is used by proclamation, its Effective Rating decreases by one, to a minimum of zero where it ceases to function.
- An Edict's Effect Rating can be temporarily boosted by 1 for a single point of Breath. An Oroboros may dedicate as many points of Breath as she is able in a turn to this end, it has no upper limit.
- An Edict's Effect Rating can be temporarily boosted by 2 if used on a target that fits the condition of an Ordinance.
- An Edict's Effect Rating can be temporarily boosted by 2 if the proclaiming Oroboros has the Merit "Draconic 3" and uses the Draconic language in the proclamation.

Veto

Attribute: The lower of Strength or Resolve

"You will shed the Laws of my rival."

When an Oroboros learns the first dot of proficiency in an Edict, she learns the Veto law for that Edict. This gives her the innate ability to detect when one of that Edict's laws is in effect (by rolling Wits + Edict + Furnace), as well as the capacity to repeal said law.

By rolling Strength/Resolve + Edict + Furnace, the Oroboros works to nullify a law in play by reducing its Effect Rating. For Edicts that involve a number of targets, the number of targets she may 'cleanse' is based on her own Effect Rating. For Edicts that target a single entity for extensive duration, she reduces the duration by her Effect Rating.

Dice Pool: Strength/Resolve + Edict + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Effect Rating of the Law that the Oroboros sought to remove is instead increased by two.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The Effect Rating of the Law the Oroboros sought to remove is reduced by her own Effect Rating. If this reduces the rating to zero, the other Law is repealed. The result of reducing Effect Rating depends on the Law being repealed: if it was a multi-target Law then some targets are freed from its effect; if it is a long-duration Law then the duration is reduced.

Exceptional Success: Identical to success, but the reduction is Effect Rating + 3.

Metal

The Edict of Metal controls the lethality and durability of weapons. When applied to firearms (like a gun or bow), the objects bestow the Law's effects as a projectile is launched from them.

For the additional cost of one DOT of Willpower, the effect of a Metal Law can be made permanent. Permanent effects cannot be applied to the Oroboros' own biological weaponry, as such are limbs, not objects.

Targets: A number of objects up to Effect Rating for one scene, or a single object for Effect Rating hours.

Puncture

Attribute: Lower of Strength or Resolve
“Let it rend through metal like paper”

The Oroboroi gives the object a piercing quality, making it ignore an amount of durability or armor equal to the Effective Rating at time of proclamation (Write it down!). This applies even to biological and supernatural armors. If applied to a ranged weapon, Puncture also renders it a piercing projectile, meaning it ignores the Bulletproof quality (if applicable).

[GMC] When applied to handheld weaponry, this Edict only reduces the effectiveness of Standard Armor. When applied to Projectiles, this Edict only reduces the effectiveness of Ballistic Armor.

Dice Pool: Strength/Resolve + Metal + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The object is softened, doubling the effectiveness of armor against it.

Failure: The object is unchanged.

Success: Each object gains a piercing quality, allowing it to bypass another object's durability or even bullet-proof protection. If used in an attack, the object ignores an amount of armor (both worn and biological) equal to the effective rating in Artillery when they were enhanced.

Exceptional Success: The object will remain modified for one additional scene.

Maim

Attribute: The lower of Dexterity or Intelligence

“Let it twist the insides as it ruptures them”

The Oroboros imbues the object with the capacity for crippling damage. The object gains a Trauma rating equal to the Effective Rating of the proclamation (Write it down!). When used against inanimate objects, the Effect Rating is added as bonus damage to Structure.

Edict Trauma is separate from trauma imposed by Ablutions, which means the two stack. For more information about Trauma, see page **Error! Bookmark not defined.** in Chapter 2.

[GMC] This Edict gives the object the ability to impose the Trauma tilt, as detailed on page XX in Chapter 2.

Dice Pool: Dexterity/Intelligence + Metal + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The weapon is unaltered, but the proclaiming Oroboros suffers the intended Trauma for the remainder of the scene.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The weapon gains the capacity to inflict Trauma, equal to the Effect Rating at time of proclamation, until the end of the scene.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the Trauma rating is three higher. The effect on object structure is the same.

Reach

Attribute: The lower of Manipulation or Stamina

“Let it cut down all before it”

The Oroboros gifts the object with tremendous range, giving it the capacity to sweep across a battlefield of opponents. The object gains the “Sweeping Hit” feature at a level equal to the Effect Rating (On ranged weaponry this allows for the strike of a group of closely clustered opponents from a distance). In addition, when used on scenery (like a wall) the Oroboros may rip an opening large enough for a creature of equal size to the effect rating to pass, provided she exceeds the structure of the wall with her attack.

Dice Pool: Manipulation/Stamina + Metal + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The object is riddled with faults in the attempt. After one use, it shatters.

Failure: No effect.

Success: The object gains the capacity to strike a myriad of opponents in a single blow, or open a sizable hole in the scenery.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the sweep rating is one higher.

Possible Combinations

From a glance, the purpose of Metal appears to simply be the construction of deadly weaponry. It has a very important role in the infiltration of secure structures, however, particularly when locks and vaults are involved. By combining Puncture with Maim, an object can easily rip through even the thickest steel, but to make a suitable size opening will take time. Maim and Reach make instant doors easy, though they must overcome the object's durability. Finally, Puncture and Reach are enough to rip through a wall, provided the Oroboros hits hard enough. Put all three together and the building's barriers turn to butter.

Earth

The Edict of Earth takes the functional and reduces it to dust, just like great boulders are worn away to clasts of sand. It then allows said clasts to be reassembled into brand new objects.

Targets: Effect Rating objects, permanently (or for the scene if Artifacts)

Soften

Attribute: The lower of Resolve or Stamina
“Let them soften like sand.”

The Oroboros depletes the objects' hardness. Their durability is reduced by the effect rating of the proclamation. If durability is reduced to a negative number, it will add to the damage an object sustains when struck successfully.

Dice Pool: Resolve/Stamina + Earth + Furnace
Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The objects actually harden, improving their durability by 2.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: Each object experiences a decrease in Durability equal to the Effect Rating. This reduction does NOT result in a decrease in structure; that's the purview of a different Law. Unless the object is supernatural, this depletion is permanent. If Durability slips into negative

numbers, it adds successes to the damage inflicted on a successful strike to the objects.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the point of Breath to make the proclamation is recovered.

Erode

Attribute: The lower of Intelligence or Wits
“Let them crumble like ash.”

The Oroboros inflicts unseen fractures upon the object. For each point of damage the object's structure suffers it loses a point of Size, reflecting a significant loss of mass. If the Size of the object is reduced to negative numbers it crumbles into sand. Each object also immediately suffers an amount of structure damage equal to the Effect Rating, less its Durability (and Artifact rating if applicable).

Each loss of size results in a Size 1 pile of sand (or particulate dust of whatever the object was made from).

Dice Pool: Wits/Intelligence + Earth + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Oroboros accidentally repairs the object. It recovers full structure and does not suffer the ill effects of this Law.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The objects will crumble each time they suffer damage. They also suffer a burst of damage to structure upon proclamation.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the objects immediately lose a point of size.

Lithify

Attribute: The lower of Presence or Composure
“Let them fuse together like stone.”

The Oroboros takes together a sufficient quantity of sand or other finely-grained substance and fuses it in the shape of a set of identical objects of her choice. These objects have Durability equal to the Effect Rating of the proclamation (write it down!) and can be used like their mundane counterparts for an equivalent bonus (so a stone knife the Oroboros crafts would have the same attributes as an equivalent kitchen knife). Objects created in this manner can have moving parts but such must be purely mechanical: for instance the Oroboros cannot make a sandstone computer and have it function, but she may construct a pistol that works just fine. The Oroboros must know how a mechanical object works in order to construct it: an appropriate Science or Crafts roll may be required.

To use this Law there must be a sufficient mass of sand particles to equal the size of the object.

Dice Pool: Presence/Composure + Earth + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Oroboroi believes she's constructed viable objects, but after one use they crumble back into dust.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The Oroboroi constructs a number of identical objects equal to the Effect Rating. These objects each have Durability equal to that same rating.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the objects have an additional three points of Structure.

Possible Combinations

Earth is in many ways a means of quickly disarming aggressors, but it can also serve as a fast and affordable means of arming the Oroboros' allies.

By combining Soften and Erode, the Oroboros can instantly disarm a full SWAT team. Erode and Lithify gives the Oroboros the ability to reshape objects in her vicinity as she pleases, as the former provides the sand needed for the latter. Soften and Lithify takes a little more advanced planning: an Oroboros might create decoy equipment to substitute for a weapons shipment; when the buyer actually receives the goods they are sufficiently weakened to be easily disabled. Putting all three laws together lets an Oroboros disintegrate the equipment of her foes and then reassemble it in the hands of her allies.

Wood

The Edict of Wood taps into the forces of nature to bring life and health to botanical organisms, and to use them as weapons and to the benefit of the creating Dragon.

Targets: Effect Rating radial yards, permanent with conditions

Allergen

Attribute: The lower of Stamina or Intelligence
"Let the pollen cloud their minds"

The proclaiming Oroboros triggers a spray of pollen from all nearby plant sources. Anyone within range suffers an immediate sneezing fit, even if they are not particularly allergic to outdoor irritants. This fit lasts for a number of turns equal to

the Effect Rating of the proclamation. While sneezing, those in range are essentially blind.

This law requires plants to be nearby in order to have an effect. The plants affected gain the highly allergenic pollen permanently; new beings entering the area suffer the same fit but are permanently acclimated to the irritant once they finish sneezing.

Dice Pool: Stamina/Intelligence + Wood + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Oroboros triggers the pollen spray, but subjects herself to the allergic fit.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: Within a number of yards equal to the Effect Rating, hyper-allergenic pollen clouds the air. Anyone within this cloud suffers a sneezing fit for a number of turns equal to the effect rating, and can take no other action during that time.

Exceptional Success: The effect lingers an additional three turns.

Bloom

Attribute: The lower of Resolve or Manipulation

"Let them grow strong, reaching for the light."

The proclaiming Oroboros seeds the growth of plant matter, sprouting a bed of flowers as well as a number of saplings equal to the Effect Rating within the target region. If any plants are already within the area, they are sped along their natural lifespan, advancing a number of stages up to the Effect Rating. She may do so with a seed to cause it to grow to viable age instantly, or even with a dead plant to decompose it into mulch. With a high enough Effect Rating and repeated applications she might even be able to fossilize the plant. For the purposes of this game, the stages of deciduous tree are seed, bud, sapling [one fruit], adolescent [one dozen fruit], adult [dozens of fruit], ancient [hundreds of fruit], deadwood x 10, and fossilized wood. It is assumed the saplings Bloom grows are deciduous.

The plants sprout through the ground, even if solid steel would deter them. If in a skyscraper or other structure this may impair the integrity of the building if the plants are too large. Spawning plants with this Law can improve the air quality of the area of effect almost immediately. They may also give the Oroboros a means of reaching areas she would otherwise be unable to pass, like a downed staircase or a chasm. Otherwise, there is no mechanical effect outside the instant creation of a beautiful garden.

Dice Pool: Resolve/Manipulation + Wood + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Oroboros accidentally kills the plant.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The Oroboros miraculously grows the targets. This is done with a time compression, so to all outside science it appears to have reached the new age by natural means. There are many practical uses for accelerating a plant's development, the most apparent being immediate availability of a climbing surface or air filtration.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the roots of the plants stabilize the structural integrity of the building they occupy, preventing a collapse (unless of course that was the Oroboros' intention).

Harvest

Attribute: The lower of Dexterity or Strength
“Let it fill them with the energy of light.”

The proclaiming Oroboros forces each plant in the target area that is capable of bearing fruit to bloom with golden produce. Consuming one of these mystical fruit in the scene replenishes a number of Bashing and Lethal wounds equal to the Effect Rating, but consuming more has no additional benefit.

There must be a plant large enough to grow the fruit, which usually means application of this Law requires the presence of a tree. Saplings can grow one fruit each, adolescents will grow a dozen at a time, while adults can grow several dozen at once and ancients sprout hundreds at a time.

Dice Pool: Dexterity/Strength + Wood + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Oroboros causes the plants to bear fruit, but the fruit grown is ordinary and she does not know this. If she's trying to impress an audience, she likely embarrasses herself.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The Oroboros spontaneously alters the plants, forcing them to spawn an amount of golden fruit based on their age and size. Eating one of these fruits can replenish serious injury, healing a total number of wounds (any mix of Bashing or Lethal) equal to the Effect Rating.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, those that eat the fruit may benefit from its effect one additional time.

Possible Combinations

Wood is at its core an Edict for controlling combat, and this becomes clear in its combinations. By combining Allergen and Bloom, the proclaiming Oroboros may drive a group to be paralyzed with sneezing anywhere she pleases, gaining sight advantage in the tussle. Bloom and Harvest gives her an easy means of treating serious injury, and can even serve as a 'potion factory' for her den. Conversely, while fighting in a public park the Oroboros can combine Allergen and Harvest, treating her own injuries while everyone else is distracted. All three together makes for a portable forest that bows to the Oroboros' whims.

Water

The Edict of Water gives the Oroboroi control over liquids, water or otherwise. She may summon it and manipulate it into restraining or drowning her enemies.

Targets: Effect Rating radial yards, one scene

High Tide

Attribute: The lower of Stamina or Wits
“Let the waters break their bounds”

The Oroboros summons a deluge of water within the area dictated by the target. This water gathers in any way that is plausible; it might well up from the sewers, burst from pipes, or even trigger an intense localized downpour. The amount of water summoned is enough to fill a space equal to the square of the Effect Rating (so an Effect Rating of 5 can completely fill a building space of 25 or less).

If the total volume is less than half the total space (round down) of the setting, the water is under waist height and imposes a -3 penalty to Speed. Any higher ratio means the area has flooded, force all within the area to swim and apply the Aquatic Combat rules from Chapter 2 to the scene (see page **XX** in that chapter for more information).

The Oroboros who makes this proclamation may choose to exclude herself from the water's depth, forcing it to bend around her and forming an air pocket. Such invokes the Miasma in witnesses.

For more information on holding breath, see page 49 in the **World of Darkness** Rulebook.

Dice Pool: Stamina/Wits + Water + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The water gathers but gravitates to the proclaiming Oroboros. She must hold her breath or suffer the effects of drowning. The water will remain in a bubble around her for a number of minutes equal to the Effect Rating of the proclamation. She may spend a point of Breath to disperse it, though.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The Oroboros floods the area with water, either from the pipes of a building or the surge of a sewer (or rarely, from the sky itself). At high Effect Rating it creates an aquatic battlefield in which all who are not of the sea suffer.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the water volume has a size rating 5 higher.

Snap Freeze

Attribute: The lower of Intelligence or Resolve
“Let the frost consume them”

The Oroboros enlists a volume of water from the area to freeze opponents in place. For each point of size the Oroboros chooses to deplete from an available water source, she may freeze one opponent within the target region. Opponents frozen in this manner are treated as grappled, and must overpower the ice to escape. This takes the form of a contested roll, with the ice rolling Furnace + Effect Rating in lieu of an Attribute. While frozen, victims suffer one lethal wound from frostbite each turn.

As implied, this Law requires a ready water source to deplete. Use the size chart in Chapter 2 to determine how much water is available in a given body, or reference the High Tide Law if such is the source of the liquid.

Dice Pool: Intelligence/Resolve + Water + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The ice actually forms around the proclaiming Oroboros. She suffers the ill effects of this Law until such time as she escapes.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The Oroboros freezes a number of opponents in place. Based on how high the Effect Rating of the proclamation and how clustered the opponents are (as well as how much water is available) she can trap quite a measurable number of victims with this ability.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the victims immediately suffer one lethal wound from frostbite.

Fog

Attribute: The lower of Presence or Wits
“Let the clouds fall”

The Oroboros enlists a volume of water from the area to whip up a cloying fog. For each point of size the Oroboros chooses to deplete from an available water source, she may thicken the air with smoke in the target region. Anyone within the region suffers a penalty to perception equal to the volume of water evaporated, and cannot detect another entity within the region without first succeeding at a Perception roll. The fog also makes any attempt to use ranged weaponry suffer that same penalty. The proclaiming Oroboros may part and cluster the fog at will; as such she does not suffer these penalties.

As implied, this Law requires a ready water source to deplete. Use the size chart in Chapter 2 to determine how much water is available in a given body, or reference the High Tide Law if such is the source of the liquid.

Dice Pool: Presence/Wits + Water + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The water evaporates but does not form fog.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The Oroboros fills the region with fog, confusing and inhibiting opponents. Based on how high the Effect Rating of the proclamation and how clustered the opponents are (as well as how much water is available) she can reduce visibility to an arm's length and grind even the busiest streets to a screeching halt.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the penalties while navigating the fog are one higher.

Possible Combinations

Water is an inhibiting Edict, primarily for the purpose of restricting a hostile's options of attack. Its combinations are fairly straight-forward. By combining High Tide and Flash Freeze, the Oroboros may freeze her opponents and watch them drown as they try to escape the grasp of the icicles. Combining Flash Freeze and Fog is particularly useful on the pier; the curious fog draws victims in like moths, wherein she may paralyze and destroy them while maintaining complete anonymity. High Tide and Fog combined serve as an excellent means of bypassing security; while they panic over the broken pipes the Oroboros drifts in and out of restricted areas, unnoticed and unrecorded under the cover of the clouds of steam. Combining all three

makes for a very frantic and terrifying aquatic battle.

Fire

The Edict of Fire manipulates... fire! It can be used to create a dangerous environment, quickly burn classified information, or even call down a bolt of lightning.

Targets: Effect Rating radial yards, one scene

Desiccate

Attribute: The lower of Presence or Strength
“Let the sun dry the soil to dust.”

The Oroboros increases the aridity of the air, simulating a desert environment. Those within the range of effect immediately begin to suffer the effects of deprivation as if they have gone without water for a number of days equal to the Effect Rating. This means that for every point of Effect Rating that exceeds the victim's Stamina he suffers a resistant Bashing wound, and his healing rate is halted until he rehydrates.

The heat within the area is extreme, and causes at least one flammable object to catch fire immediately (a small blaze of Size 1, Heat 0). In addition, dry brush and papers have a chance to catch fire each turn: the proclaiming Oroboros rolls a number of dice equal to the Effect Rating before taking any actions on her initiative; on a success another small fire (Size 1, Heat 0) breaks out in the desiccated area.

[GMC] This Edict triggers the Extreme Heat tilt against all combatants within the area of effect. The hazardous environment created has rating 1. See pages 209 and 213 in the **God Machine Chronicles** Rulebook for more information.

Dice Pool: Presence/Strength + Fire + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The area is subjected to a pleasant breeze and summer storm. Everyone within recovers from one Bashing wound, if possible.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The area of the proclamation is subjected to an intense drying and heating effect, causing thirst deprivation to all within (except the Oroboros). Brush fires may spark in the area.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, a single Brush fire ignites.

Immolate

Attribute: The lower of Resolve or Manipulation

“Let it burn away everything in its path.”

The proclaiming Oroboros intensifies a fire, feeding it oxygen and increasing its size (or heat) by her effective rating in Fire at time of proclamation. Once fed, the flames remain at that size until they die down naturally.

Once the fire reaches the size of an Inferno, only heat may be intensified. There must be a fire for the Oroboros to use this Law. For more information on fire consult the **World of Darkness** Rulebook, page 180.

Dice Pool: Resolve/Manipulation + Fire + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Oroboros accidentally puts the fires out.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The Oroboros increases the size of the fires a number of stages equal to the Effect Rating. Once the fire is an inferno, excess effect is applied to the heat of the flames.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the heat of the flames increases another stage

Jolt

Attribute: The lower of Manipulation or Stamina

“Let the power of the heavens strike them down.”

The Oroboros compresses the energy of a flame into Saint Elmo's Fire (or ball lightning) and then shatters it, dispersing a jolt of electricity across the area. The current of the jolt is equal to the size and heat of the original flame. Thus it deals two Bashing damage per point of size and heat the fire had. The fire is obviously extinguished by this action. The jolt may electrocute a number of targets in the region equal to the Effect Rating.

Since the damage is based on the size and heat of a fire, Jolt requires a fire to be present in order to have any effect. For more information about electrocution, consult the **World of Darkness** Core Rulebook, pages 177 and 178.

Dice Pool: Manipulation/Stamina + Fire + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Oroboros loses control of the ball lightning. She accidentally includes herself in the jolted victims.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The Oroboros compresses the fire's heat and size into electrical energy and launches it

as a lightning bolt. This, spread around up to the Effect Rating targets, deals bashing damage equal to twice the fire's heat and size. For more information on electrocution, see page 178 of the **World of Darkness** Core Rulebook.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the jolt deals an additional four Bashing damage.

Possible Combinations

Fire is an Edict of environmental hazard, and its core purpose is widespread destruction. It is, after all, one of the greatest tools of death any being can muster. By combining Desiccate and Immolate, the Oroboros can ignite a brush fire and instantly erupt it into an inferno. Combining Immolate and Jolt lets an Oroboros quench a burning building and, in the process, grievously harm anyone who is opposing her in the effort. Conversely, Desiccate and Jolt grants her a renewable font of lightning bolts. Combine all three and the Oroboros becomes the god of lightning.

Assembly

The Edict of Assembly manipulates crowds. Its laws isolate individuals and overpower them with mob mentality. Assembly is the Edict of the peacemaker; it is best used to diffuse hostile situations.

The highest Wits rating among the targets is levied as a penalty against proclamations of the Assembly Edict.

Targets: Effect Rating people for one scene.

Gather

Attribute: The lower of Presence or Composure
“Hear me, citizens! There is a great injustice that must be brought to your attention!”

The Oroboros snatches the attention span of a crowd, forcing them to gather. For the remainder of the scene, the Oroboros treats a group of mortals the size of the Effect rating as a single mortal for the purpose of making social rolls and proclamations. For example, at Effect Rating 3 the Oroboros treats groups of three as single entities for the purpose of her proclamations.

The targets of this Law serve as ringleader to the crowd, and it is their attributes that are used for resistance. If supernatural beings are in the crowd, one of them must be selected as the leader of that crowd. Also, members of the crowd instinctually gather into a cluster that represents roughly the

center of combat range—each member is within three yards of each other.

Dice Pool: Presence/Composure + Assembly + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Instead of catching the focus of a crowd, the Oroboros scatters them. She cannot attempt this Law again this scene.

Failure: The crowds do not form.

Success: Crowds form around the primary targets, allowing the Oroboros to make proclamations against a much wider count of targets. Each crowd consists of a number of mortals equal to the Effect Rating at time of proclamation (It lets the Oroboros multiply her targets by the Effect Rating of this proclamation).

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the crowds are three people larger each.

Truce

Attribute: The lower of Strength or Presence
“Let us throw down our arms and discuss the matter as diplomats”

The Oroboroi puts her foot down and the fighting stops. She calms every target of the proclamation for the remainder of the scene. During this proclamation, none of the affected targets may take aggressive action (this includes the proclaiming Oroboros). At duration's end, no matter how the Oroboros made use of the Truce, all restrictions are removed.

Only those who hear the Oroboros' call for truce will cease fire. She will need a way to get their attention.

Dice Pool: Strength/Presence + Assembly + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The crowd breaks into a full brawl.

Failure: The crowd remains belligerent.

Success: The crowd settles down, unable to attack each other until the proclamation ends.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the effect lingers for an additional scene.

Pariah

Attribute: The lower of Manipulation or Dexterity

“Let us shun the ones who would lead us astray”

The proclaiming Oroboros renders the targets socially invisible. They inexplicably write each other off as a nuisance, drowning out anything said.

This does not render the targets incapable of being noticed, it simply stops others from caring about their presence.

All social rolls made by afflicted targets are penalized by the Effect Rating of the proclamation (Write it down!). This effect lasts for the scene.

Dice Pool: Manipulation/Dexterity + Assembly + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: At the end of her proclamation, the Oroboros unfortunately passes gas. People misinterpret her band-standing as a gag, laugh, and walk away.

Failure: The targets do not write each other off as annoyances.

Success: Targets attempting to interact socially suffer a penalty to act equal to the effect rating of Assembly at the time Pariah was proclaimed.

Exceptional Success: Identical to success, but the penalty is an additional -3.

Possible Combinations

Assembly lets an Oroboros gather a crowd, but changing their minds on an issue will have to come from her own cunning. Still, being able to proclaim to the masses is a huge advantage. Combining Gather with Truce can instantly end a riot. Combining Gather with Pariah can ensure that the Oroboros is the only person anyone is listening to during the scene. Combining Truce and Pariah lets the Oroboros control small hostile situations, such as muggings and negotiations, with ease. Combine all three and the Oroboros becomes the key speaker at her own personal press conference.

Husbandry

The Husbandry Edict manipulates animals to the Oroboroi's benefit. All Husbandry laws may affect many targets for a short duration, or one target for a long duration, but not both.

Special to this Edict, any effect may be made permanent with the expenditure of a Willpower DOT. This may only occur when the Oroboroi is targeting a single animal.

Skill: Animal Ken

Targets: Effect Rating animals (1 hour) or one animal (Effect hours)

Blatancy-Utility: Blatant-Curiosity

Domesticate

Attribute: The lower of Presence or Composure
“You will follow my command, lesser beast.”

The Oroboros drains all hostility from the animal, and in turn fills it with loyalty to her. Until the end of the duration the animal will not show aggression against the Oroboros and will follow her commands if it has been properly trained (This likely requires the use of Animal Ken).

The animal is still, in all respects, a beast. It will not comprehend her language and will not be able to conduct tasks it does not understand.

Dice Pool: Presence/Dexterity + Husbandry

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The animal immediately attacks the proclaiming Oroboroi, and will continue to do so for the intended duration.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The animal calms and will not attack the Oroboros, even if threatened or harmed. It follows her commands if able.

Exceptional Success: The duration of the effect is doubled.

Familiar

Attribute: The lower of Intelligence or Stamina
“You will take upon your shoulders the weight of a mind enlightened”

The Oroboros gifts the animal a state of humanoid intelligence, increasing its Intelligence attribute by the number of successes rolled. In addition, the Oroboros receives an allocation of skills dots which she may gift to the animal, equal to the Effect Rating at time of proclamation. Finally, this proclamation also gives the animal the capacity to talk, in the Oroboros' native tongue (IE: an American Oroboros can make animals speak English). When the duration ends, the animal reverts to its normal state.

Though given this Intelligence, the animal is not bestowed any manner of loyalty. If used while the animal is attacking it may even remain hostile. Animals under the effect of the Familiar Edict trigger the Miasma in mortals.

Dice Pool: Intelligence/Stamina + Husbandry

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The animal appears to become more intelligent, but is actually unchanged. The Oroboroi will not discover this until she tries to communicate with the animal and embarrasses herself.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The animal gains a number of dots of Intelligence equal to the successes rolled in the activation of this Edict, for a number of hours based on how many targets the Oroboroi chose to

enhance. The animal also gains a number of dots in skills (of the Oroboros' choice) equal to the Effect Rating of the proclamation for the same duration. These animals can communicate in the Oroboroi's native tongue, but remain creatures of their own free will.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the animal gains an additional three dots of skills.

Hybrid

Attribute: The lower of Manipulation or Wits
“You will take upon you the traits of another... that you might benefit from its strengths.”

The Oroboroi crosses the animal with another species in sight. The resulting mythical hybrid shares all the key biological features of both species, and has physical attributes that represent the average of the two source species. In addition, the Oroboros receives an allocation of Physical attribute dots which she may gift to the animal, equal to half the Effect Rating at time of proclamation (rounded down). When the duration of this proclamation ends, the animal instantly sheds all the features from the secondary species and reverts to its former state.

If the animal is wild, it likely flies into a rage upon this transformation. The animal instantly acclimates to its new features: if it grows a horn it knows it can charge to attack; if it grows wings it knows how to fly.

Dice Pool: Manipulation/Wits + Husbandry

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The animal suffers debilitating organ incompatibility and dies in a writhing mass.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The animal gains the key biological features of the second species, for a duration in hours based on the number of animals influenced by the proclamation.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the Oroboros may adjust the hybrid's size bigger or smaller 3 categories. Health is affected by this adjustment but will not drop below one dot.

Possible Combinations

Husbandry is, at heart, a means of controlling wildlife. By combining Domesticate with Familiar in a group context the Oroboros can quickly assemble a crack-team of discrete spies to scout an area. Mixing Familiar with Hybrid in a group context is an excellent way to cause chaos and

distractions: a herd of suddenly sentient and suddenly mythological beings are likely to break into a terrible rampage; by contrast an Oroboros' actions might even seem normal. Combining Domesticate with Hybrid in a group context forms an instant army of attack fiends the Oroboros can easily sic on a cabal of aggressors. Finally, using all three laws in a permanent individual sense is an excellent source of an intelligent, Retainer-esque companion.

Hippocratic

The Hippocratic Edict controls the state of the body, repairing damaged tissue, making the flesh hardier against injury, and sometimes even reattaching it.

Targets: Effect Rating living things for one scene

Brace

Attribute: The lower of Stamina or Resolve
“Our strength of will can withstand any volley of bullets!”

The Oroboros grants the targets Heroic Health dots, equal to the Effect Rating. These dots last until the end of the scene and follow the rules of Heroic Health detailed in Chapter Two on page **XX**.

Dice Pool: Stamina/Resolve + Hippocratic + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The proclaiming Oroboroi accidentally inflicts lethal wounds on the targets.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: Each target gains a number of Heroic Health dots equal to the Effect Rating, until the end of the scene.

Exceptional Success: Identical to success, but each target gains an additional three Heroic Health dots.

Mend

Attribute: The lower of Intelligence or Dexterity
“Let there be healing where before there was only pain.”

The proclaiming Oroboros accelerates the rate at which the target's tissues mend. Until the end of the scene, subjects recover one bashing wound each turn and one lethal wound every other turn. This stacks on top of their natural regenerative capabilities.

Dice Pool: Intelligence/Dexterity + Hippocratic + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The Oroboroi slows down the target's metabolism accidentally. They cannot recover Health during the scene, by any means.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: Targets acquire the accelerated healing mechanics for the scene, as described in the above law.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the targets may remove two wounds from their meter, provided they are not Aggravated wounds.

Regenerate

Attribute: The lower of Strength or Composure "Let the bonds of blood and sinew remain unbroken."

The Oroboros infuses the target with the energy of life, re-attaching a dismembered body part or repairing a broken bone. For bones, this is always permanent.

For severed limbs, if it was severed this scene the effect is permanent. Otherwise, this law's duration is in days, equal to the square of the Effect Rating at time of proclamation. At duration's end, the restored appendage withers and then disintegrates. If the body part was severed within a number of weeks less than or equal to the Effect Rating, if what's left of it can be recovered (even ashes are fine), AND if the Oroboros adds a Willpower DOT to the cost of proclamation, the effect is permanent.

A reattached or repaired limb suffers limited utility; severed limbs will permanently suffer a -6 penalty for use, less the Effect Rating of the proclamation. For example, a limb reattached with Regenerate at Effect Rating 4 will suffer a -2 penalty for use. If the Effect Rating would reduce the penalty less than zero, the limb is attached so superbly that there is no evidence it was ever severed. There is no excellency bonus beyond this, a demand of the universe to discourage the dismemberment and reattachment of limbs for benefit. Broken bones only suffer a -3 penalty for use, less the Effect Rating of the proclamation.

Penalties may be counted as flaws for the purpose of character motivation and experience, and extensive physical therapy may reduce the penalty over the course of months until the limb regains (mostly) full utility: over time it can fully eliminate the penalty.

[GMC] This Law removes permanent conditions related to loss of limbs or bone damage.

Dice Pool: Strength/Composure + Hippocratic + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: Not only does the limb fail to reform, but the stump begins to bleed profusely. The target suffers one lethal wound every other turn until pressure is applied and the wound is closed.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: For severed limbs: Bone, then muscle, and finally skin flare into existence where the severed body part would be positioned. The replacement limb functions as normal for the duration of the proclamation. Alternatively, tendons lash out of the stump and grab the severed limb, reattaching it (provided the limb is present and was lost this scene).

For broken bones: the bone snaps back into the position (often painfully) and then the surrounding damaged tissues (muscles, skin, tendons) tear away and reattach correctly. It can be quite horrifying to witness, actually.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the penalty the target would suffer for reattachment or repair is one less than the Effect Rating would suggest.

Possible Combinations

The Hippocratic Edict is a portable medical miracle, giving an Oroboros the power to protect, refresh, and even reassemble her allies. By combining Brace and Mend the Oroboros can practically guarantee her friends will survive a fight unscathed. Mixing Mend with Regenerate accelerates team recovery after a battle that goes wrong; the Mend effect removes wounds while Regenerate fixes lasting damage. Finally, Brace and Regenerate keep the Oroboros' friends at full fighting strength even as their limbs are wracked and their bodies shredded; Brace gives the extra Health to survive a strike and Regenerate fixes the complications that come from terrible injury ([GMC] This is especially true when tilts come into play). Mixing all three will let the Oroboros keep everyone in perfect Health.

Polygraphy

The Edict of Polygraphy unfurrows the fabric of truth, making lies into facts. Polygraphy's Laws

reveal lies to the Oroboros by turning those lies into truths, each manipulates a lie of a different breed.

Because Polygraphy turns lies into truth, the Oroboros technically does not detect a lie at all, she forces the lie to be truth. As such, supernatural powers that boost lies are not protected from Polygraphy because they stop being lies when subjected to the Edict's power. The roll to lie has to actually succeed before Polygraphy fills in the details.

Targets: Effect Rating beings, one scene with conditions

Omission

Attribute: The lower of Wits or Presence
“Let the words they forget come to haunt them.”

The Oroboros shrouds the targets in an aura of warped reality. When they withhold facts that would harm her endeavors, those facts mysteriously vanish. Failed to mention the alarm system? It's gone. Forgot to convey the password for the guards? The password does not exist. For the duration of the scene, lies of omission ERASE the hazards they would be protecting.

It is not a perfect protection. After each omission erasure the Storyteller quietly rolls a number of dice equal to the Effect Rating of the proclamation: if it fails then the Law expires. Features it erased remain erased, but the targets are free once more to withhold facts without consequence.

Dice Pool: Wits/Presence + Polygraphy + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The proclaiming Oroboros believes she has instilled the effect, but the Edict has failed. She will not know until it is too late.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The dragon coats the targets in honesty: lies of omission become truths as they literally erase the omitted facts. Each time this occurs, the Storyteller secretly rolls a pool made of the Effect Rating... if it fails the effect ends.

Exceptional Success: Identical to success, except the roll is no longer private. The Oroboros knows when her magic has expired.

Exaggeration

Attribute: The lower of Strength or Resolve
“Let their truths be drenched with hyperbole.”

The Oroboros shrouds the targets in an aura of warped reality. When they tell the Oroboros about

something that would stand in the way of her endeavors, their warnings are rendered exaggerations. The compound is guarded by attack dogs? They're actually Chihuahuas. The security system has a thirty-two bit encryption? The password is 12345. For the duration of the scene, truths the target supplies about the dangers of an endeavor REDUCE the danger the Oroboros will actually encounter.

It is not a perfect protection. After each forced exaggeration the Storyteller quietly rolls a number of dice equal to the Effect Rating of the proclamation: if it fails then the Law expires. Features it pacified remain pacified, but the targets are free once more to speak the whole truth without their words becoming exaggerations.

Dice Pool: Strength/Resolve + Polygraphy + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The proclaiming Oroboros believes she has instilled the effect, but the Edict has failed. She will not know until it is too late.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The dragon coats the targets in dishonesty: truths he tells become gross exaggerations. Each time this occurs, the Storyteller secretly rolls a pool made of the Effect Rating... if it fails the effect ends.

Exceptional Success: Identical to success, except the roll is no longer private. The Oroboros knows when her magic has expired.

Untruth

Attribute: The lower of Intelligence or Composure

“Let the lies turn to ash in their mouths.”

The Oroboros shrouds the targets in an aura of warped reality. When they lie outright, their lies become real. Said he had a friend with an in? He does. Said he knew how to hack their system? He knows. For the duration of the scene, straight lies become truths. This may take the form of a temporary boost to skills, a raise in attributes, a change in merits, or even the spontaneous creation of equipment out of the immediate perception.

It is not a perfect protection. After each lie correction the Storyteller quietly rolls a number of dice equal to the Effect Rating of the proclamation: if it fails then the Law expires. Truths it created remain in place, but the targets are free once more to lie without abandon.

The Law is clever enough to see through sarcasm, but only if the Oroboros sees through it.

In this case, being gullible might lead to a very dangerous situation.

Dice Pool: Intelligence/Composure + Polygraphy + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The proclaiming Oroboros believes she has instilled the effect, but the Edict has failed. She will not know until it is too late.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The dragon coats the targets in honesty: straight lies become truths as the world moves to make the target's word a reality. Each time this occurs, the Storyteller secretly rolls a pool made of the Effect Rating... if it fails the effect ends.

Exceptional Success: Identical to success, except the roll is no longer private. The Oroboros knows when her magic has expired.

Possible Combinations

The beauty of Polygraphy should be apparent—it completely saps the power out of lies by turning them into truths. The best use of it is in the grilling of a subordinate, however, especially if said subordinate is being particularly cheeky. Combining Omission and Exaggeration makes the facts he leaves out vanish and the facts he leaves in inconsequential. Exaggeration plus Untruth makes the lies he tells turn back on him, but reduced in potency so much that the Oroboros can shrug them off. Omission and Untruth together make a particularly squirrely interrogation inescapably informative—the two together can completely unravel a conspiracy by erasing the omitted and making the liar's fibs backfire (He says it's just a fishing operation and he neglects to mention the drugs within? Well, there goes his organization, up in smoke! The drugs, the thugs, all erased by the Polygraphy laws). Combining all three transforms any interrogation into syndicate collapse.

Oath

The Oath Edict expects only the truest intentions of everyone, and demands that the honor of one's word is irrefutable. By force.

Targets: One person for Effect Rating weeks

Reprimand

Attribute: The lower of Strength or Wits
“You gave your word. Be sure you keep it.”

The Oroboros forces the target to be accountable for his promise. When acting against them, he suffers the agony of boiling blood. This sensation crushes his heart and physically resembles a heart attack, but the target knows better. He suffers lethal wounds equal to the Effect Rating at the time of the proclamation (Write it down!), and suffers Trauma rated at the same value. These wounds can be reduced by the target's preternatural potency, but the Trauma cannot.

This effect lasts until the promise is broken or reaches its inevitable conclusion, or until the duration expires. If the Oroboros directly forces the target to break the promise, the penalty suffered is only half.

This law must be applied to a promise, at the time the promise is made.

Dice Pool: Strength/Wits + Oath + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The proclaiming Oroboros unintentionally ties her own body to the binds of the promise. If the target does not uphold his word, then the dragon will suffer the consequences.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The dragon ties the target's physical well-being to the weight of his promise. If he does not keep his word his blood will boil, inflicting lethal wounds and trauma.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the point of Breath to make the proclamation is recovered.

Act

Attribute: The lower of Manipulation or Resolve

“If it is to be done, let it be done now.”

The Oroboros forces the target to keep his promises. By proclaiming this Law, the Oroboros compels the target to immediately pursue the completion of his promise this very scene. If he attempts to stall, he suffers theft of Willpower equal to the Effect Rating of the proclamation (Write it down!). Willpower lost in this manner is granted to the proclaiming Oroboros.

This effect lasts until the promise is fulfilled, the target resists, or the duration expires. If the Oroboros directly forces the target to resist, the penalty suffered is only half.

This law must be applied to a promise, at the time the promise is made.

Dice Pool: Manipulation/Resolve + Oath + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The proclaiming Oroboroi unintentionally ties her own body to the binds of the promise. If the target resists acting immediately on his promise, the dragon will suffer the consequences.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The dragon ties the target's mental well-being to the weight of his promise. If he does not take action towards the goal immediately he will feel his force of will drain away, sending points of Willpower to the proclaiming Oroboroi.

Exceptional Success: Identical to success.

Vow

Attribute: The lower of Presence or Stamina
“I have to know that I can trust you. Do you promise?”

The Oroboros forces the target to make a promise. Though there is no supernatural compulsion tied to it, the force of the promise bleeds into the world around him. People hear about what he has sworn to do, and his reputation is thusly imperiled if he does not keep his word.

The longer he waits, the more people learn about the promise. Within the first day, everyone he knows hears of the promise. By the second day, everyone that THEY know hears of the promise. This continues for the duration of the proclamation's effect (so Effect Rating days). For particularly intense Effect Ratings a promise can be known by the entire world before the proclamation wears off.

Again, the penalty for breaking the promise is not mystical or mechanical, but rather a social stigma due to the widespread awareness of the target's word.

Dice Pool: Presence/Stamina + Oath + Furnace

Roll Results

Dramatic Failure: The proclaiming Oroboroi unintentionally ties her own body to the binds of the promise. If the target does not uphold his word, the dragon suffers a -2 penalty to act for the remainder of the scene.

Failure: Nothing happens.

Success: The dragon imposes a mental barrier in the target, hindering his attempts to break the promise. If he tries to break his word, he will feel an unseen force pushing against him, and suffer a penalty to the attempt equal to the effect rating.

Exceptional Success: In addition to success, the point of Breath to make the proclamation is recovered.

Possible Combinations

Oath can be a difficult Edict to get used to; it depends entirely on the anticipated ethical breakdown of another living being. Each Law has a limited scope, only combined do they begin to show their terrifying power. When Reprimand and Act come into play, the Oroboros forces the target to shit or get off the pot; if he flinches he will boil, body and soul. Still, the Oroboros must time the proclamation appropriately so that the promise she punishes is the one she wants fulfilled; it can be difficult to get the right window. Combining Vow with Reprimand—and likewise combining Vow with Act—evades this problem; the Oroboros forces a promise into existence and generates a worldwide audience to witness it. The former, though, runs the risk of going unfulfilled as the target can simply stall out the Law's power. The latter is flawed as well, only punishing the target for stalling (he is still free to abandon the promise after his mind takes its beating). Only by combining all three laws can an Oroboros guarantee she'll get what she wants.

High Octane Games

Most games will not extend past the Furnace rating of 5, as reaching such a pinnacle is a journey within itself. Those that do wish to play the blazing inferno that is Furnace 6-10 may optionally use the following:

Ablution dots 6-10: These are relatively easy, as all of the Ablutions are designed in a manner that can be extended to ten. Continue the sequential bonus, or the odd over even bonus, or assign more features to a compound Ablution. No Ablution can have a dot rating higher than the Dragon's Furnace (After dot five, that is), and manifesting any Ablution 5 or higher requires two forging points, not one.

[GMC] The last statement is no longer true. All Ablution manifestation and disbanding requires one forging point, regardless of how high the trait climbs.

Edicts 6-10: More difficult than the Ablutions are the Edicts. While the effective rating scales well, a higher level Edict would require more laws to be available (and perhaps even laws that have a minimum dot requirement to unlock). Though additional laws for each could be detailed here, the degree of creativity that comes with designing high-level powers is not one we wish to rob. Extra Laws and extra Edicts will be major topics in other **Dragon the Embers** line books.

